POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

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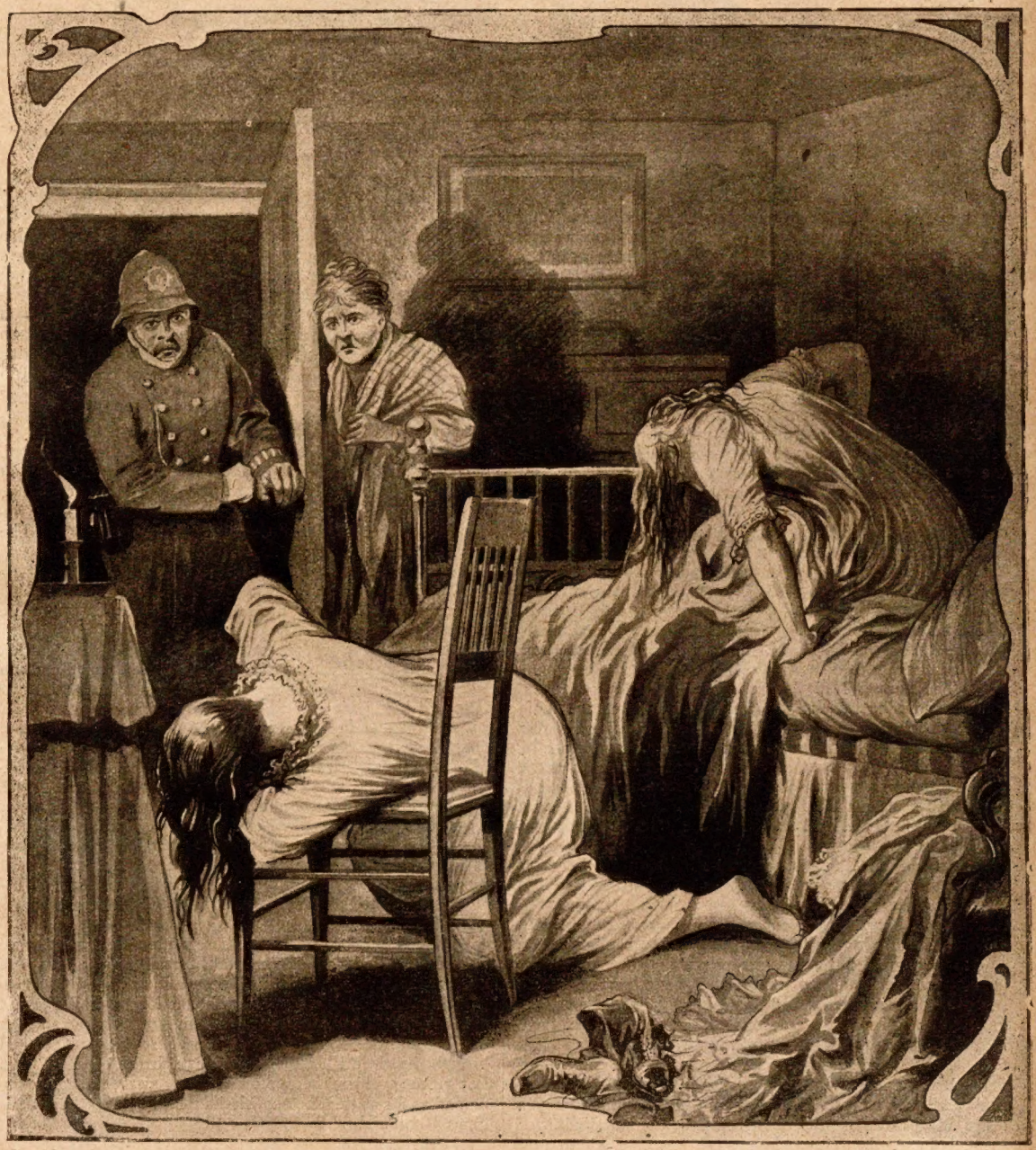

THE MURDERS BY NEILL CREAM.

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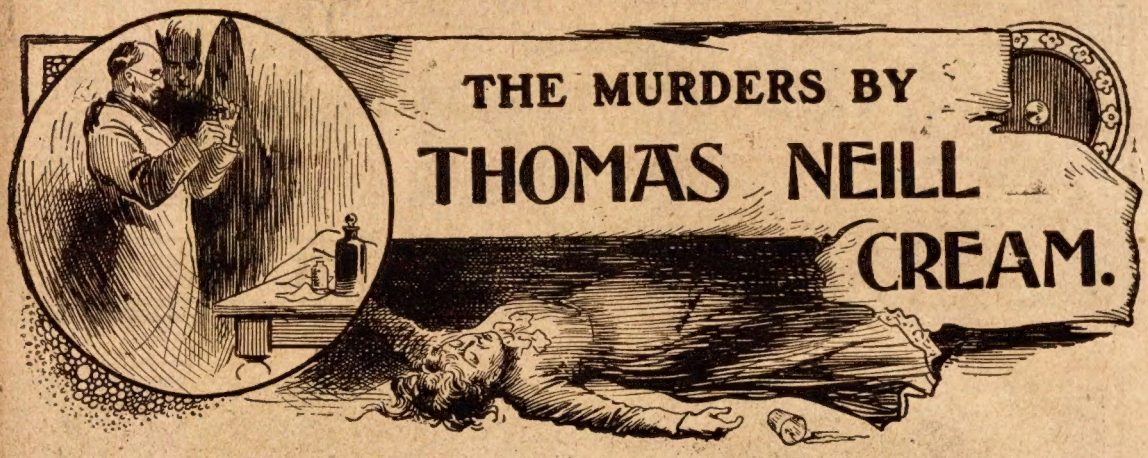


THE MURDERS BY THOMAS NEILL CREAM.

"Wherefore you have
Commanded of me these most poisonous compounds,
Which are the movers of a languishing death."

SHAKESPEARE, "Cymbeline," Act I., Sc. 6.

PART I.

THERE have been few cases in which fatal eagerness to reap profit from a crime has terminated with such deadly effect as in the case of Dr. Neill Cream, the perpetrator of the Lambeth murders, in the early nineties. Such is the provision of Nature for the detection and prevention of crime that the man who is marked with the brand of Cain sooner or later makes some mistake which fastens the halter around his neck, and Cream was no exception to the rule. The mistake which he made, and which led to his discovery, was one which it is difficult to imagine anyone whose education is above the average committing, yet to the last Neill Cream was unable to detect the error in his calculations which led to his disgraceful death at the hands of the common hangman.

In 1850 there was living in Glasgow a commercial man of the name of William Neill Cream. He had been married but a short time, and on May 19, 1850, his first son, Thomas Neill Cream, was born to him. The times were bad, and Cream found it difficult to make a living for himself and his wife and child, so he emigrated to Canada, where he settled in Quebec. Other children were born to William Cream in the land of his adoption, but with them we have nothing to do.

When Thomas Neill Cream had passed through the usual school course he was sent by his father to study medicine in one of the universities of Canada, but whether he ever actually took out his degree by examination, or whether he acquired one by payment, as was far from uncommon in the New World even twenty years ago, is not known, but it is certain that after a time Neill Cream blossomed out as a Doctor of Medicine, and started on the practice of his profession.

He settled in Chicago, where he built up a solid practice among the better-class residents. Of this we are certain, for there are still persons living who remember the doctor as a prosperous medical practitioner. But he had in him the criminal taint, which began to manifest itself.

It was rumoured that Dr. Cream was not over-scrupulous in matters which affect medical etiquette, as well as the seventh commandment, and his consulting-room was frequented by ladies whose amorous propensities had got them into difficulties. This went on for a time, and then Neill found himself arrested on a charge of complicity in a murder. It was apparently a case arising out of an illegal operation, and it was asserted that Cream had provided certain drugs and instruments knowing the purpose for which they were to be used. The whole affair was hushed up very much, but Dr. Neill Cream was compelled to seek retirement in Joliette Gaol, Ilinois, for the term of his natural life.

Neill had been in prison for about seven years when his father died, and he inherited the bulk of his wealth. A Mr. Davidson was one of the executors under the will of William Cream, and he had some difficulty in finding the heir, but when he did discover where he was no time was lost in petitioning for his release. At first no hope was entertained, but later on an order for the liberation of Neill Cream was obtained by powerful influence, and he was let loose on the world in July, 1891. For a short time he stayed with his brother, Daniel Cream, at Montreal, but he behaved in such a strange manner with his relations that he was advised to travel for his health, and accordingly sailed for England, and landed in Liverpool on October 1, 1891.

A day or two sufficed for Neill to get tired of Liverpool, and he went to London on October 5, and, after staying at an hotel for a couple of days, settled down in lodgings.

We now must visit some of the more sordid parts of London, where dwell ladies of the very existence of whom "The Young Person" is supposed to be ignorant. In the streets just south of the River Thames, between Blackfriars Bridge and St. Thomas's Hospital, live many women who, having made one great mistake in life, have been driven into a life of shame.

One of these unfortunate beings, by name Matilda Clover, lived in the house of a Mrs. Phillips, at 27, Lambeth Road. With the exception of her calling she bore the reputation of being a quiet, well-conducted young woman, but, as is frequently the case with ladies of her profession, she drank heavily at times. She had one particular friend, who was known to the landlady of the house as "Fred." Suddenly, about the middle of October, 1891, Matilda Clover and "Fred" fell out. Bitter recriminations passed between them, and the scene ended on the doorstep, where Fred declared that although he was the father of Matilda's child he would never see her again. What was the exact cause of the quarrel never transpired, but it is fair to assume that "Fred" objected to Matilda dispensing her favours to other people.

That she was fond of another gentleman there cannot be the least doubt, for she several times met a tall man with a heavy moustache, and on one occasion went to the theatre with him. After the quarrel with her lover Matilda again met her new friend, and on the evening of October 20 took him home with her. To refresh her guest she went out and brought in several bottles of beer, which the couple drank. Later that evening the gentleman went away, being accompanied as far as the door by Matilda Clover, who there bade him "Good night."

In the small hours of the morning the house was alarmed by terrible screams proceeding from Clover's bedroom, and on the servant-maid, Lucy Rose by name, going to see what

was the matter she found Clover lying across her bed, with her head tightly wedged between the bed and the wall. She tried to move her, but could not do so, and accordingly called in the landlady, who helped her to put the woman straight. In a few minutes the sufferer was again suddenly convulsed, and it took all the strength of the two women to hold her down. Then the convulsions seemed to pass off, and Clover regained consciousness and called for her child, then two years old. The relief, however, was only temporary, and again the fit came on. This alarmed Mrs. Phillips, who went herself for a doctor, leaving Rose in charge of the sick girl.

She first went to a Dr. Graham, who, being engaged, referred her to Dr. McCarthy. In his turn, Dr. McCarthy was occupied, and told the woman to fetch his assistant, an unqualified man, named Coppin. Altogether, this running about took time, and it was not till seven o'clock in the morning that Mr. Coppin got to 27, Lambeth Road to see his patient.

He found her bathed in perspiration and terribly weak.

HIS CONSULTING ROOM WAS FREQUENTED BY LADIES.

The maid who had been attending on the sufferer since the first attack described the symptoms as well as she could, but the spasmodic convulsions do not seem to have had any sinister meaning for Mr. Coppin, who said that he would send round some medicine and call again later in the day.

He had hardly left the house when another attack of convulsions came on, and Matilda Clover was bent up like a bow, suffering intense agony. Mrs. Phillips ran off again for the doctor, but he did not think it worth his while to come again so soon. One more attack was too much for the weak body, worn out by the agony of the night, and at a quarter to nine Matilda Clover died, the only person actually present being Lucy Rose.

Whether the manner in which the night had been spent aroused any suspicions in the mind of the landlady or not we cannot say, but there is no doubt that she was very averse to having an inquest held, and to avoid this registered the death herself, stating that she was present at the time. About the certificate of death she had no difficulty at all. Dr. Graham had attended Matilda for several days for an attack of alcoholism, consequent on the defection of "Fred," and when he had been told by Mr. Coppin and Mrs. Phillips that the symptoms were not unlike those of a person raving in delirium tremens he readily signed his name to a statement that death had resulted from alcoholism and syncope. This done, the body of the poor unfortunate was handed over to the parish authorities and buried at Tooting.

Matilda Clover had been in her grave for about a month when Dr. Broadbent, the celebrated physician, of Seymour Street, W., received a letter from a Mr. Malony, accusing him of having poisoned Clover with strychnine, and telling him that if he would pay him £2,500 he would give him the proofs of the matter and say nothing more about it. The writer also pointed out to the doctor that if the case got into the papers it would naturally mean professional ruin for him, a fact which he thought the eminent physician incapable of deducing for himself. Altogether the letter was one of the ordinary blackmailing type and very clumsily constructed at that, so Dr. Broadbent thought little about it, and sent it to Scotland Yard for them to deal with as they thought fit. The police officials did not think fit to deal with it at all, and the document was relegated to a pigeon-hole, where it lay till subsequent events showed the importance of the accusation made at random as a link in framing an accusation against the writer of the letter.

About the same time as the tragic death of Matilda Clover another woman following the same profession received a letter at her lodgings in Duke Street, Westminster Bridge Road, asking her to meet the writer that evening. She left her rooms about six o'clock, and two hours later was found lying in the gutter in Waterloo Road, screaming and in convulsions. She was conveyed at once to St. Thomas's Hospital, but died before she reached that institution. Before her death, however, she had time to inform the police that a "gentleman with a high hat and a dark beard had given her two drops of white stuff to drink." From her papers her name was discovered to

be Ellen Donworth. A post-mortem examination was made by Dr. Kellock, one of the lecturers at St. Thomas's Hospital, and both strychnine and arsenic were found in the stomach in large quantities. Of course, an inquest was held in this case, and a verdict of "Wilful murder against some person unknown" returned.

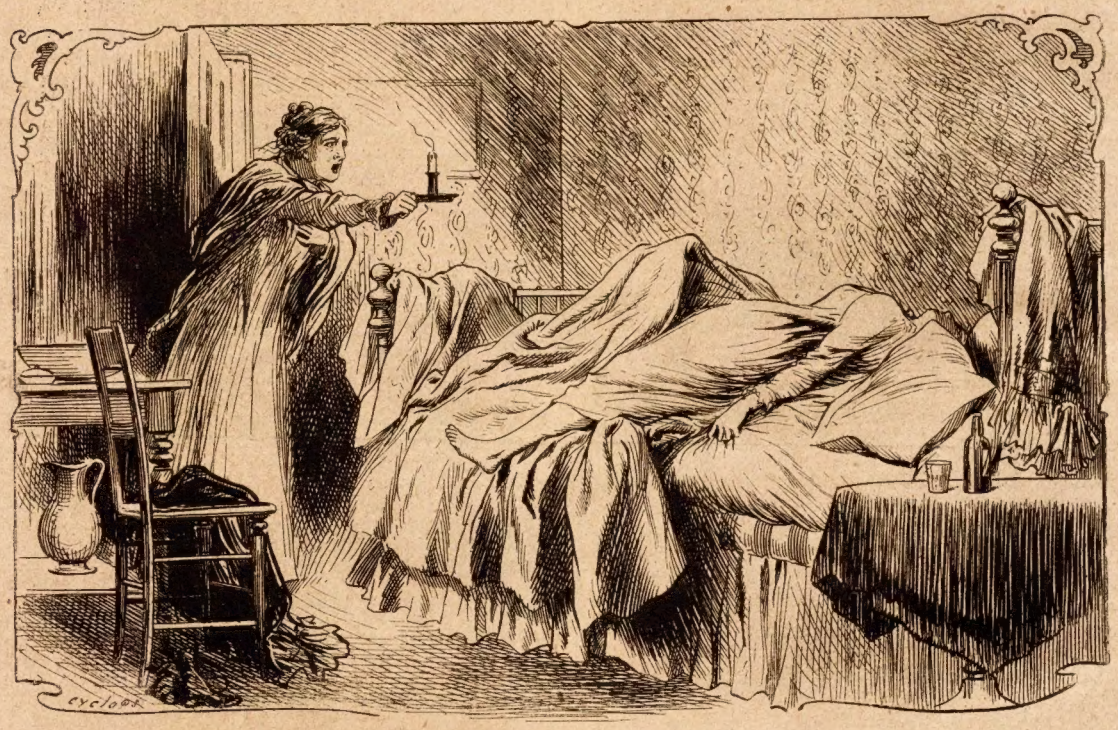
In the murdered woman's possession was found a letter warning her not to take the medicine that Mr. Smith was going to give her, as the writer had seen him put enough strychnine into it to kill a horse. This letter was produced at the inquest and read, but little could be made of it. The police, however, arrested a man named Smith, who had been suspected of poisoning women in public-houses for some time, but against whom no direct evidence had ever been produced. Smith was brought before a magistrate, and, as there was absolutely nothing to connect him with the death of Ellen Donworth, whom he declared he had never even seen, he was discharged.

A new phase was given to the case, however, when Mr. Wyatt, the coroner, who had held the inquest, received a letter from a man who signed himself "O'Brien, detective," stating that the writer was in possession of the name of the murderer and of proof of his guilt which he was willing to disclose if the Government would pay him the modest honorarium of three hundred thousand pounds! Need we say that the coroner was a little astonished, and handed the precious paper to the police to be pigeon-holed? Then it was found that the handwriting of the warning letter which was found in Donworth's possession and that of the request for £300,000 was the same. The full significance of the two letters was not at first apparent, and it was only when Mr. F. Smith, of the firm of W. H. Smith and Sons, added a communication which he had received to the collection that the devilish cunning of the plotter was revealed. The letter to Mr. F. Smith was signed by a man called "Bayne." It informed him that Ellen Donworth had died on the 13th of October, and a certain letter had been found in her room incriminating him and pointing him out as the actual murderer. If Mr. Smith wished to save himself and save his family from the shame and disgrace which must necessarily follow on the exposure of his crime he would accept the services of Mr. Bayne as his legal friend and adviser, and would put a notice in the window of his premises in the Strand to that effect.

This at once put the detectives on the track of the blackmailer, and a notice, as requested, was placed in the window of the Strand shop, but nothing came of it. Apparently the bird took fright and fled, for that twig was "limed in vain."

While all this was going on, what was Neill Cream doing? When he left the hotel at which he had first stayed in London he took lodgings at 103, Lambeth Palace Road, in the house of a Mrs. Sleaper. There he was known as a traveller in drugs for an American firm, and was away from the house a good deal.

On one of his travels Neill met a Miss Laura Sabbatini who lived at Berkhampstead. Miss Sabbatini was possessed of some property, and Cream fell in love either with the possessor of the property or with the possessions. Anyhow he proposed to marry her and was accepted. To make the necessary arrangements for his marriage he found it essential that he should go over to America and consult his father's executors, and accordingly he sailed for Canada on New Year's Day, 1892. Before he went he left a will in the possession of his fiancée, bequeathing to her all his belongings. Subsequently it was found that "Malony," "O'Brien, detective," "Bayne," and the writer of Cream's last will and testament wrote curiously similar hands.



CLOVER WAS LYING ACROSS THE BED.

When he reached Canada Neill Cream went to Quebec, where he stopped at one of the best hotels in the town. While there he made the acquaintance of Mr. John Wilson McCulloch, a commercial traveller, with whom he became very friendly. He did not mention to him that he had been a medical man in the New World, but he told him that he practised medicine in London, in the district about the Waterloo Road. One day McCulloch came into Neill's room and the latter showed him some false beards

and wigs. In answer to McCulloch's natural inquiry as to what he wanted such articles for, Cream explained that in his practice it was necessary to perform operations which it was not advisable for the general public to hear of, and that when he was called in to operate he

Was found lying in the gutter.

usually wore a disguise to prevent the patient recognising him afterwards.

Pressed for further information, he told the traveller that he was generally consulted by ladies who had become enceinte and who did not wish to bear the burden of maternity without the moral support afforded by the wedding ring. He was always ready to assist the afflicted, and used to relieve them of their embarrassment for a consideration. He then showed McCulloch a quantity of white crystals which he said were deadly poison but which were much used by medical men for procuring abortion. McCulloch was interested, and led Neill to talk about his life in London, which from the account Cream gave must have been of the most sordid description, and it is a wonder that a sharp business man like McCulloch was not a little suspicious of a man who openly acknowledged that he performed illegal operations and carried large quantities of poisons about with him.

Cream stayed in Quebec till the middle of March, when he again sailed for England, carrying with him an elaborately-fitted medicine chest, containing pills and capsules of every description. This he declared was his sample case, and told his fellow-passengers that he was travelling for the firm of Harvey and Co., drug merchants and American specialists, of Montreal.

When he arrived in England, Cream returned to his old lodgings, with the Sleapers, at 103, Lambeth Palace Road, from whence he used to pay periodical visits to Berkhampstead to see Miss Sabbatini. During the whole period that Neill occupied his rooms in Lambeth Palace Road it had been his custom to dine at a restaurant; when, therefore, on the 10th of April, he told Miss Sleaper that he wished to dine at home that night, he had to explain that he had a late engagement that evening which would prevent him having time to dine out. Dinner was prepared, and Neill ate it, and then went out. No one saw him return, but in the morning he was at home as usual.

Early on the morning of April 11, 1892, a policeman on duty in Stamford Street saw a man leave a house in which two loose women were known to hold levees. The man was dressed in dark clothes with a cloak and a silk hat. He had a heavy moustache. Three quarters of an hour later the constable was called into the house—118, Stamford Street—where the two young women, by name Alice Marsh and Emma Shrivell, were lying in strong convulsions and screaming with agony. Shrivell was doubled up face downwards across a chair, and Marsh was almost bent double on the bed. The constable at once called assistance, and the two women were carried downstairs and placed in a cab to be taken to St. Thomas's Hospital. On the way there Alice Marsh died. Shrivell survived for six hours in great pain, but she was able to make a statement between the paroxysms which incriminated a man whom she called "Fred."

"Fred," it appears, was a doctor who had promised to assist the girls who were both likely to become mothers, and had called to see them on the previous evening for that purpose. The trio had taken tea together, and about two in the morning the "doctor" had given them two "long pills" to take, telling them that all would soon be well with them. He then left; three-quarters of an hour later they were taken ill. At the post-mortem examination strychnine was found in the stomachs of both unfortunate women. An inquest was opened and adjourned for a week in the hopes that further particulars might transpire. This was on Thursday, April 13.

On Sunday morning Neill Cream sent for Miss Sleaper, and asked her to go out and fetch him "Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper," as he wanted to see what there was in it concerning the cases of poisoning which had taken place in

Saw a man leave a house.

Stamford Street. She did so, and after breakfast Cream sat for some time reading about the murders and discussing them with his landlady's daughter. She asked him why he took so much interest in them, and he said that they were so cold-blooded that he was fascinated by them. He then turned the conversation to the doings and position of a

young medical student named Harper, who occupied three rooms in the same house, and who had left the house on Saturday for a few days' holiday. Miss Sleaper was well posted in the private life of her mother's lodgers, as is the duty of all people who keep lodgings for bachelors, and told Neill that the student was the son of a prominent doctor who was practising in Barnstaple. She then went upstairs to tidy up Mr. Harper's room, and Neill followed her, continuing the conversation. While upstairs he managed to get hold of a photograph of the medical student, which he stole.

Later in the day Cream met a young engineer named Haynes, whom he had known for some few days. While chatting with him he told him that "Young Dr. Harper" had poisoned Matilda Clover, Alice Marsh, Emma Shrivell, and a woman called "Loo" Harvey. Haynes was startled, and asked Cream how he knew of this, and was told in reply that he had heard from a detective who was a friend of his. Then Neill went on to say that they had all been poisoned with strychnine, and that he had obtained the strychnine

The paper bore the tell-tale water mark.

for the young doctor, who had got into trouble with some women and wanted to get out of it without exposure. At Neill's request Haynes took this statement down and gave it to him. He retained, however, the rough notes which he had made while his informant was talking. Then the couple went for a walk to St. John's Wood, and Cream showed Haynes a house—No. 55, Townsend Street, St. John's Wood—where, he said, "Loo" Harvey used to live, and where she had been taken back when she had died. Haynes remarked that he had never heard of the death of "Loo" Harvey, and then Neill told him that the unfortunate young woman had been taken suddenly ill when she had left a music-hall, and had died in the street. He added that Harvey was not her real name, but that she had been living with a builder of that name for a very long time, until she met young Harper.

All this struck Haynes as mysterious, and he did not want to be mixed up in the matter at all. However, he went to the police, and told the whole story to Sergeant McIntyre, of the Criminal Investigation Department.

McIntyre did not remember any mysterious death near a music-hall, nor did he recollect having ever heard of the woman "Loo" Harvey. To make sure of his ground he sent an officer to make inquiries concerning the woman, and for several weeks the search for her went on.

About this time Cream began to get nervous, and fancied that he was being followed, so he complained to the police, and, by a coincidence, Sergeant McIntyre was instructed to look into the matter. He made inquiries amongst his brother detectives, when he found that the constable who had seen a man leave the house in Stamford Street in the small hours of April 11 rather fancied that Neill was the man, and that they were watching him to try and identify him more certainly. This being the case, the sergeant kept Cream off his guard, and, while pretending to protect him, assisted his brother officers to gain their end.

Close to Cream's lodgings in Lambeth Palace Road there is a small public-house, called The Pheasant, to which McIntyre invited Neill to come and tell him his story. Neill went in, and found there Detective-Inspector Harvey and Constable Comley, of the L Division. These two identified Cream, and while the latter had gone back to his lodgings to fetch his case of samples to convince the sergeant that he was really a commercial traveller, McIntyre told the inspector and constable all he knew about the man. They agreed that he should be kept in sight, but not arrested on such slender evidence. The evidence which they wanted to justify their capture, however, was not far off. It came in the shape of a complaint from Dr. Harvey, of Barnstaple, that someone of the name of Murray was attempting to blackmail him, and enclosing a letter, in which the writer assured the doctor that Mr. Harvey, Jun., was the murderer of Marsh and Shrivell, while he offered to suppress the evidence for the sum of £1,500.

Now, McIntyre had a wonderful knack of keeping silent when silence was golden, and he was in possession of three letters, also written by Mr. Wm. H. Murray, to the coroner, the foreman of the jury that sat on Marsh and Shrivell, and one to another detective, but of these he had said nothing to any but his immediate superior, for he saw at once that the handwriting was not Neill's, and he wanted to find out by whom they were written, or to find some definite connection between them and his quarry. He had also one or two other little matters which he wished to be cleared up before he played his trump card; so he continued to "protect" Neill, while his agents went on with their investigations.

While "protecting," Sergeant McIntyre managed to get a glimpse of a handwriting similar to that of the letter to the coroner and jury, but, unlike that of the letter to Dr. Harper, and we may be sure that he did not take long in discovering that the writing was that of Miss Sabbatini, the lady to whom Cream was engaged. The other letter was a puzzle; but there was one fact about it which attracted the detective's attention, namely, the "watermark." The watermark was:

"FAIRFIELD.—Superfine,"

and McIntyre was trying to find out where that paper was made. After much telegraphing and many inquiries he found out that it was a Canadian brand of writing-paper and that it was not to be bought in this country. That was another link in his chain. Then one morning—May 24—he went to Neill's lodgings before he was up, and, after chatting to him for a few minutes, asked him to get up and write a few lines for him. Neill, nothing suspecting, took out his writing-case and scribbled a note for him; the paper bore the tell-tale watermark, "Fairfield.—Superfine"!

The next move in the game was made by Neill himself, and even making all allowances for the folly which is always mixed up with the murderer's cunning, it is almost impossible to understand. Imagine a man who knows that he has committed a murder and that suspicion has not attached itself to him, feeling sure that he has a friend in a police officer who is protecting him from annoyance which is only imaginary, turning to that police officer and saying: "I am going for a few days! Do you think that I will be arrested before I go?" Yet that is exactly what

Cream did. The sergeant saw at once how matters lay, and asked Neill to accompany him to Scotland Yard to find out whether he was safe. Neill started off with him, and when he had gone some little distance suddenly stopped and said:

"Oh, you sent a 'rip' to ask questions about me the other day. I suspect you of doing the double, and I won't go."

McIntyre allowed him to return, but he was carefully shadowed from that moment, and a day or two afterwards, when it was found that he was making preparations to flee, was arrested and taken to Bow Street, where he was charged with sending a blackmailing letter to Dr. Harper. He was naturally remanded, and when next he appeared before the magistrate the charge had been altered to one of murder. How that came about was as follows:

We have said that the Criminal Investigation Department was not idle while Sergeant McIntyre was taking such fatherly care of Neill Cream. Well, when Inspector Harvey returned to "The Yard" after the interview with Cream at The Pheasant, he put on his thinking cap, and suddenly it dawned on him that in the November of the previous year a letter had been sent from Dr. Broadbent which the physician had received, stating that Matilda Clover had been poisoned with strychnine, and that then, in April, Cream had told Haynes that the girl had been poisoned with strychnine by young Harper.

Getting the same statement from two different sources, struck the inspector as strange, since there had not been the least suspicion of poisoning at the time, so he had inquiries made among all the loose women who lived in the Waterloo Road district, and as the result of his investigations applied to the Home Secretary for an order for the exhumation of Clover's body. This was granted, and the body was taken from its pauper's grave, in Tooting Cemetery, by a man named John Hare, in the presence of Harvey and other officials, on May 6. Portions were at once submitted to Dr. Stevenson, the analyst to the Home Office, and he pronounced that death had undoubtedly been due to strychnine poisoning.

He Talked to the Wall.

SIR W. PRINGLE, the celebrated Scottish advocate, was apt to be very short-tempered when he imagined that one of the judges before whom he was pleading did not listen to him with the attention he thought he and his client's interests deserved. On one occasion Lord Forglen was on the bench. Sir W. Pringle opened a case before him, and his opponent, among other objections, insisted that notice had not been regularly posted on the wall, which was the method of giving due notice at the time. Sir Walter replied to all the objections with accuracy and spirit, but paid no attention to the trifling point of form about the notice. Lord Forglen suddenly interposed with, "Sir Walter, you have argued your case very well, but what do you say to the wall?"

"Indeed, my lord, I have been speaking to it this half-hour," was the sharp reply, as he swept out of court in a great passion.

A Merited Rebuke.

MR. BROUGHAM, the eminent special pleader, once defended a case tried before Lord Ellenborough in which the publishers of a newspaper were tried for libel, and he made a very spirited address on their behalf. The Lord Chief Justice, in his summing up, remarked that the defendants' counsel had imbibed the noxious spirit of his client, and had inoculated himself with the poison and virus of the libel. When the defendant was brought up for judgment, Mr. Brougham thus complained of these animadversions: "My lord, why am I thus identified with the interests of my client? I appear here as an English advocate, with the privileges and responsibilities of that office, and no man shall call in question my principles in the faithful and honest discharge of my duty. It is not assuredly to those only who clamour out their faith from high places that credit will be given for the sincerity of their professions." The judge accepted the rebuke in silence, which was more discreet than his strictures on Mr. Brougham.

Prisoners' Pets.

MANY a murderer has discovered his last friend in a mouse! The harmless little animal—for he is harmless individually if not collectively—is never a respecter of persons, and when he discovers that his visits are not objected to, and that the solitary man sitting on his hard plank bed welcomes him rather than otherwise, he will rapidly lose his natural fear and make a friend and confidant of the unhappy prisoner.

On one occasion a convict made a desperate onslaught on the warder who brought him his scanty fare. This man—clothed in a little brief authority—had deliberately crushed beneath his heel a poor mouse which the prisoner had taught to come to him and eat out of his hands the few crumbs he could spare from his meal. The prisoner had pleaded hard for the life of his little friend, and one sympathises rather with him than with the hard-hearted gaoler.

Cases of this kind are not uncommon, though in the case of mice it has usually happened that the little animals have been of the field species, caught outside and smuggled in by the prisoner or some one for him. Prisoners are often set to work in the fields haymaking or harvesting, and there is little difficulty in securing a harvest mouse, putting him into the pocket, and covering him with a handkerchief to prevent his escape.

It has been said that a six-ounce loaf of prison bread has often been the reward or price paid for the taming of a domestic mouse in gaol, and some offenders are peculiarly apt at the difficult task. Rats are still less easy to make pets of, and it is not difficult to understand that the average convict feels less inclined to attempt the taming of the fierce rodent, who is never very companionable at the best of times. Latude, however, trained a number of rats to come to his call during his many years of confinement in the dungeons of France.

On leaving gaol, a man is often begged to bequeath his pet to some less fortunate prisoner whose "time" is not yet completed. Not only rats and mice, but sparrows, jackdaws, reptiles of all kinds, and even moles, have been made pets of by prisoners, who find in their task of subjugation some relief from the deadly and seemingly interminable monotony of the cell.

A grim story is related of the wholesale Russian murderer, Duplonski. This man, a Muscovite version of our own John Williams of 1811, John Jones of 1870, and of the French Troppman, slaughtered a farmer, his wife, and six children not far from Odessa. A long time elapsed between his arrest and trial, and during this period of suspense, he amused himself by teaching a mouse to come to him at his call and to perch on his shoulder and take crumbs from his hand. "What made you take all that trouble to train a mouse?" asked a Government official who came to visit him. "I did it to kill time," airily remarked the monster, "having no human being to kill!"

Sparrows are easily trained by prisoners, who deposit a few crumbs on the grating of the window. The little bird in brown is at first a little suspicious as to the motive underlying these polite attentions. After a time, however, he plucks up courage, and makes a matutinal visit to the window, assured that a good square meal awaits him. The prisoner then places the crumbs inside the bars, and again Mr. Sparrow becomes cautious. At length, however, he ventures inside, makes one rapid peck at the tempting morsels, and flies outside again for dear life. Again he ventures in, and, finding that he is not interfered with by the lonely man, his confidence and cheek return, and he comes boldly into the cell. From this stage to taking up a place on the floor by the man's table and graciously accepting the crumbs as they fall there is only a very brief interval.

An Austrian murderer—confined in a prison at Vienna—trained a sparrow to come at his call or whistle, and to remain in his cell for hours at a time, without the slightest fear of danger. But as soon as the warder knocked at the door or entered the cell, the sparrow flew through the narrow grating and remained in a place of security until all was quiet again and he heard the familiar summons from his friend the prisoner. Rats can be made very friendly with care and time. One can imagine the solitary prisoner glad even of the companionship of a rodent against whom every man's hand is, under normal conditions, constantly directed.

Ebenezer Samuel Jenkins.

Callous Libertine and Murderer.

He ruined his Sweetheart and then Strangled her.

"The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n."
MILTON, "Paradise Lost," Bk. I.

EBENEZER SAMUEL JENKINS, a young artist, was but twenty years of age when he settled down in Godalming, and made the acquaintance of Miss Emily Joy. He was a good-looking, pleasant-spoken lad, and, on the surface of things, would easily pass for a sensitive, cultured gentleman. At heart, however, he was a vicious libertine, with passions which he never attempted to bridle, and with a record, young as he was, of appalling and protracted vice and infamy.

The pretty little town of Godalming, as most London cyclists know, lies about four miles south of Guildford, on the road from that town to Haslemere. It is watered by the River Wey, it has many memorials of interest, and altogether is one of the most picturesque spots in what may well be termed the garden of Surrey.

An ideal place, therefore, for an artist in which to pitch his tent. Nor could he want for congenial company. In summer time the neighbourhood is crowded with landscape painters, and, moreover, many artists and men of letters, attracted by the beautiful scenery, have built their own houses and established themselves there permanently. When, therefore, Ebenezer Jenkins, the artist, appeared in Godalming with his easel and portfolio, his presence occasioned no surprise.

The writer of this memoir of crime was living at that time, that is, in the year 1888, near the "artist-haunted" village of Shere, half way between Dorking and Guildford. He remembers well the horror evoked by the brutal murder of Miss Joy; the subsequent trial and execution of Jenkins; the apparent absence of motive for such a foul deed; the facts as to the murderer's character and criminality which eventually came to light, and which have never been made public; and he is able, therefore, to present a complete story for the first time, which proves once again the depth of villainy to which the human mind is capable of descending.

How many young girls became the victims of Jenkins's brutality in the few years of manhood allowed him, it would be very difficult to conjecture. From boyhood upwards he nurtured the carnal spirit of a fiend. Outwardly a dreamer and an idealist, he allowed himself inwardly to be consumed with a burning passion for vice. His thoughts were hideous, his actions horrible; morally, he was a leper in human form.

We need not inquire into his history prior to his arrival at Godalming. It is enough to say that he was a pariah amongst his old friends and acquaintances. He was disowned. And so, happening to visit Godalming, and meeting with an open and kindly reception from Miss Joy's family, and being then in straightened circumstances, he seized the opportunity of freeing himself from pressing want. He expressed a desire to lodge in the house; he was admitted as a paying guest, and with a sigh of relief he knew that his monetary difficulties were over for the moment. He now had time to look about, to form new plans. In the dire straits in which he found himself, that at least was something.

As is usual with men of his type, he was consumed with vanity, and traded, whenever possible, upon the credulity of others. To the Joy household he posed as a man of some means, and of considerable expectations. He was clever and discriminating in the lies he told. And so, before long he came to be known in Godalming as a young fellow with money, and accordingly he was allowed as much credit as he wished.

Mrs. Joy, who was a widow, lived in Church Street, Farncombe, just outside Guildford. Besides Emily, she had two other children, a son and daughter. The house was comparatively a small one, and Jenkins, who was always talking about his art, said he would find it impossible to paint his pictures in the house, and that he must find a studio. Accordingly, after some investigations, he selected a hut in a suburb called Brown Pits, about two hundred yards from the principal street of Godalming, and surrounded by cottages. He had little difficulty about renting it, and then he set it up as a studio. It was here that the tragedy was enacted.

Jenkins had not been long residing at Mrs. Joy's house when he became attracted by her daughter Emily. The young lady was nineteen years of age, with a good figure and singularly pretty face. Her manners were gentle and refined, and her sweet disposition was reflected in the expression of her hazel eyes, and the soft inflection of her voice. She was, moreover, a capable girl, and had a position of responsibility in the family as her widowed mother's chief support. In Godalming she was well known, and equally respected.

As soon as Ebenezer Jenkins felt himself released for the moment from the harrying anxiety of dire poverty, his worst instincts came to the front again. The more he watched Emily Joy ministering to the family wants, brightly and cheerfully, the more thought she showed for the comfort of her mother's paying guest, the more he realised what a good, pure-minded girl she was, the more he craved to degrade her. Those graces of womanhood which evoke the highest ideals of true men serve but to stimulate the basest passions of creatures like Ebenezer Jenkins. By constant contact with vice his mind had become perverted. He cherished what was false and foul.

He was quick to see that in this case a vulgar intrigue was impossible. So he paid countless little delicate attentions to the young lady, after the manner of an honourable suitor. They were not without their natural effect. Miss Joy, in all innocence, had been favourably impressed by the young stranger from the first. His manners were polished, his conversation interesting, and his character, apparently, above suspicion. From courtesy and friendliness her manner gradually changed to one of affection. Then Ebenezer Jenkins formally proposed for the young lady's hand. She accepted him; and as, on his own statements, made at various times, his position was well established and was certain to improve, Mrs. Joy gave her consent to the engagement. Before long all Godalming knew that Ebenezer Jenkins and Emily Joy were accepted lovers.

But all this time Jenkins realised perfectly clearly that marriage was out of the question. Though he dressed well, mixed in good society, and made handsome presents to his fiancée, yet the day was ever growing nearer when his creditors would press for payment, and he would have to leave Godalming. For he had no means whatever. And as an artist he was not a success. The thought that before long he must quit Godalming for some other town where he was not known, did not trouble him particularly. An adventurer has no shame! But he wanted to ruin Emily Joy before he was compelled to flee.

So he went about with the air of a prosperous man, spoke of his coming marriage, and even stated that he had taken a house at Bognor for his future wife. About Christmas of 1888, the date of the marriage was settled. It was to be solemnised early in the following March. And Miss Emily Joy at once began to prepare her trousseau.

Meantime, Jenkins had discovered that an engagement was no help in his nefarious plans. He was now completely baffled. Nay, more, tradespeople were becoming suspicious. Bills kept pouring in with alarming rapidity, and demands for payment became more and more peremptory. The villain saw that his stay in Godalming was drawing rapidly to an end. It was a matter now of only a few weeks, or possibly days, before the bomb might burst, and he would be shown up in his true colours. Then, of course, farewell to Emily Joy.

So the old year ended, and the new year began. His foul passion had now been so stimulated by constant conversations with this charming and innocent girl, that they drove him blindly along to the perpetration of a most appalling act of villainy. He determined to murder Emily Joy, not physically, but morally. And on that night he would leave Godalming behind him for ever.

It was Monday, January 7, 1889. All day long Jenkins was preoccupied and restless. He went to his studio, as he did usually every day for a few hours; but on this occasion he returned almost directly to Mrs. Joy's house. Again he went out, and again he returned unexpectedly. His sweetheart noticed that something was amiss, and questioned him. He answered abruptly, while he looked into her face with a queer expression she did not understand. Then, taking his hat again, he left the house for the third time, and remained absent for several hours.

He walked along the road towards Bramley for several miles, until he reached the outskirts of that village, devising all the time the best plan by which he might be able to separate his avowed sweetheart for some hours from the rest of her family. Then he returned to Godalming with his villanous programme fully thought out, and called to her as he entered the house.

"Emily," he said, "it's a lovely evening; I wish you would come for a walk."

Miss Joy demurred. She felt tired, and perhaps a little piqued at the want of attention he had paid her during the day.

"Oh, do!" he pleaded. "Besides, I want you to help me. There's a man here who owes me money, and in order

She was a pure-minded girl.

to get it from him I told him to-day that you had lent it to me. So he replied that if the money was yours, you would have to come for it yourself. You see the fix I'm in. There's a good girl, do oblige me in this!"

With a little more persuasion, she consented to accompany him, and about seven o'clock they left the house. He led her in the direction of the studio. At first she demurred at entering it alone at that hour, but he easily dispelled her maidenly scruples.

"We won't be a minute," he said; "but there are some papers I left there that I must get to-night."

So, arm-in-arm, they walked along the road and down to the Crown Pits to the small wooden hut which served as his studio, and which was built on the top of an embankment overlooking the road leading from Godalming to Brighton. Many people met them and saluted them, and poor Emily Joy had a kind word and a bright smile for everyone. Little did she dream, or little could they think when they met her thus, radiant in the company of her heart's love, that she was walking to her death. They entered the studio, and Jenkins locked the door.

About this time—that is, at half-past seven on the night of Monday, January 7, 1889—Walter Lee, a butler, was on his way to Godalming, when, about a hundred yards from the studio, he stopped for a moment and listened. He thought he had heard a stifled scream which seemed to come from a road at the back of the hut. He walked another few paces, and then he heard another stifled scream, and immediately afterwards a clattering noise as if someone was bumping violently against the woodwork of the studio. He listened intently. The cry was not repeated. The air was still, save for the sighing of the wind in the trees overhead. Surely his fancy must have played him false! In the darkening night the studio stood out on the embankment, black as Erebus. Who would be there at that hour in the dark? He thought he must have been mistaken, so he continued on his way.

A few minutes later Jenkins opened the studio door, peered cautiously out, then swiftly closed and locked it, and hurried away. In his pocket he clutched a letter on which the ink was hardly dry. It was addressed to Mrs. Joy, and ran as follows:

> "You will be deeply grieved to hear that Emily and me are going for ever. You will never see us again. We loved each other dearly, and swore we would never part. Dear mother, forgive us for all we have done. Let us be buried together—please do—in the same grave. So good-bye."

He slipped the letter into a pillar-box and entered the Sun Inn. There he called for whiskey, in payment for which he tendered a Jubilee half-crown which his victim wore in her brooch! Then he went out on the road to Haslemere.

The fever of lust had now left him; the reaction had set in. He had hoped to cajole his sweetheart, and, if she resisted, he intended to use force. But murder! No! Yet he had strangled her. The brave girl had struggled to the last; he had seized her by the throat, and held her remorselessly though he saw her life was quickly ebbing away. And now she was dead, and he would be hanged.

He could not think coherently. At the time he wrote the letter to Mrs. Joy, he meant to say that he and Emily Joy were going to drown themselves together. Were those the words he used or not? He could not remember. If they were, then the river would be dragged, and he would have the more time to clear away. If not, they would probably search the studio. And then! And then!

In three hours' time he reached Haslemere, and near there he passed the night at the Seven Thorns Inn. Meantime, Mrs. Joy wondered why her daughter and Jenkins did not return. As the hours sped by, her anxiety became so great that she and her second daughter went forth to seek them. They walked through Godalming without meeting them, and they went to the studio. The door was locked. They knocked, but received no answer. And so, unwittingly, the poor mother came away, leaving her daughter's corpse huddled upon the floor, with her features distorted with agony, and her glazed eyes fixed vacantly on the roof.

That night at Haslemere Jenkins wrestled with his cowardice, and for the time he won. As the slow hours chimed, he saw clearly, and yet more clear, that escape from death was impossible for him. Either he must die by his own hand or by the hand of the executioner. As he sat by the side of his bed throughout the long night, while the inmates of the little inn slept peacefully after the day's labour, he determined to drown himself when morning came. But when the day broke, and the signs of life awoke around him again, his courage oozed away. He kept putting off the fatal moment. He left the inn and strolled aimlessly and with erratic steps to Hindhead.

He arrived there between eleven and twelve o'clock, and noticing the Punch Bowl Inn, he entered, ordered a glass of beer, and flung himself upon the seat in a state of cowardly vacillation. Mr. Dallis, the landlord, noticed that the young fellow was strangely upset, and eyed him curiously. And then Jenkins blurted out in a moment of paroxysm that he and his sweetheart had determined to drown themselves together, that the young lady had done so, but that at the last moment his courage had failed him.

Mr. Dallis was a man of the world, and a man of action. He looked steadily at Jenkins, and gathered from his hopeless attitude and dishevelled appearance that something serious had happened. The statement, he argued, might either be true or due to a mental aberration. In either case, Jenkins was not fit to be at large. So, with a very commendable sense of duty, he determined to take Jenkins to Guildford, and hand him over to the police. Jenkins demurred. Mr. Dallis, having once made up his mind, was not a man to be trifled with, however, and so they took the next train to Guildford.

Arrived there, Jenkins's courage failed him. He knew he was going to his doom. So, as they walked down the

street, he pretended to recognise an acquaintance on the opposite side, and started to cross over, telling Mr. Dallis he would be back in a moment. But the latter shook his head.

"No," he said, "I don't intend that you shall leave my side until we see this matter through."

Then Jenkins saw that his fate was sealed, and that further concealment was useless.

So he cried, "I told you lies. I murdered the girl myself. I strangled her." And they walked into the police station.

That afternoon the body of Emily Joy was found in the studio. Its appearance was ghastly. The hands were gloved and tightly clenched. The tongue was between the teeth, and much bitten, while the pupils of the eyes were wildly dilated. The body was much bruised, and all the neck was black and swollen. She had been betrayed and murdered.

The news was received with horror and deep indignation in Godalming, where the innocent young girl was universally admired and respected. Every mark of sympathy possible was extended to the bereaved mother, and after the inquest

Mr. Justice Hawkins was the judge. As is well known, he had no sympathy with criminals; he was the embodiment of stern, relentless justice.

The trial opened, and from the outset Jenkins sat mumbling and smiling inanely in the dock. Some people present came to the conclusion that he was demented. That, of course, was what he wished.

Mr. Philip Gillet, the doctor in attendance at Holloway Prison, entered the witness-box, and in solemn accents, while the hushed court hung upon his words, he said emphatically that Jenkins was not insane, and that during all the time since his committal to prison he had never "seen him behave in the restless manner that he had that day."

After that, no defence was possible. Jenkins's counsel strove most ably, it is true, in an eloquent and impassioned speech, to shake the judgment of the jury. But Mr. Justice Hawkins, in one sentence, brushed all sophistry aside. In burning words he stigmatised the murder as one of the most bestial possible for the imagination of man to conceive; and with resonant voice he added, while the cowardly wretch

THE MURDER OF MISS JOY.

—at which a verdict of wilful murder was found against Ebenezer Jenkins—poor Emily Joy was buried in Godalming Cemetery by the side of her father, with every token of respect. Well does the writer remember that funeral. All who could snatch a day from work within miles of Godalming were gathered by the grave. There must have been six thousand people present. And in pity, tinged with bitterness, the question was asked on all sides, "What had poor Emily done that this should be her end?"

While Jenkins was in gaol awaiting his trial, he wrote constantly to the Joys, imploring them to visit him.

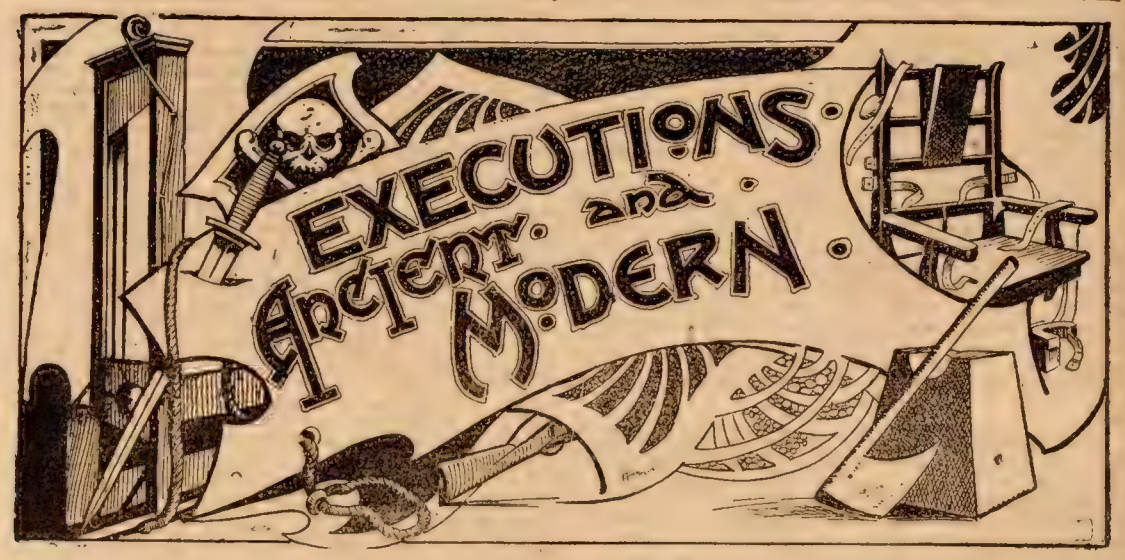
His letters make disgusting reading. The wretch wrote in endearing terms of Mrs. Joy's family, stated that his victim had died happy, and continually bemoaned her as his "lost love." It is, perhaps, unnecessary to add that all his letters remained unanswered.

As the day of his trial drew near, all Godalming was in a quiver of excitement. The Guildford streets were crowded when Jenkins was driven to the court-house, and thousands of people surged around the building. The police experienced some difficulty in escorting their prisoner unharmed from the cab to the dock.

trembled before his gaze, that not one tittle of evidence had been adduced to prove that Jenkins was not perfectly sane when, contrary to the common instincts of manhood, and taking advantage of that troth by means of which a young and chaste girl had surrendered her heart to his keeping, he had violated her in her death agony with more than the savagery of the beast.

After that there was no need for consultation amongst the jury. As Jenkins, overwhelmed by the judge's scathing statement, sank back in the dock trembling from head to foot, the jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against him. In the fewest words possible the judge passed the death sentence, and then he was dragged from the dock

Strange as it may seem, a few people actually prepared and presented a petition for a commutation of the sentence to the Home Secretary. The petition was, of course, rejected. He was executed on Wednesday, March 6, 1889. Berry was the executioner. The callous wretch slept soundly the night before he was launched into eternity; and being given a drop of 6 feet 6 inches, his death appeared to be instantaneous. So perished one of the vilest of mankind in the person of Ebenezer Samuel Jenkins, the artist.



CHAPTER V.

BEFORE leaving the Far East, it may be as well if we take a glance at some of the more curious methods of execution which obtain in China. Of course, all my readers know perfectly well that the ordinary sentence of death is carried out in the land of the Dragon by beheading, but this is not by any means the only mode of execution known to the Yellow Man. No; on occasions he indulges in crucifixion, much as did the Japanese, whose brutal behaviour we described in our last chapter, but, as a rule, when John Chinaman makes up his mind to be cruel he excels even his Japanese brother in the tortures which he inflicts.

Sometimes the Chinese do not thirst after actual blood, and then they rack their brains to devise some method which will ensure the maximum of torment for the victim with the minimum of labour for the executioner. When this is the object in view, choice is generally made of starving the unhappy wretch to death. To put him in a prison cell and leave him there to die of inanition would be far too tame to suit the tastes of the Chinaman. No; he wants to have something by way of an exhibition for his money. He knows perfectly well that a man immured in a cell might beat out his brains against the wall and so hasten the death which he knows is to be his fate, and, if he were not acquainted with the doom in store for him, he would lose the exquisite torture which anticipation brings. Moreover, no one could see the victim in his death-agonies. All this is obviated by the simple expedient of enclosing the condemned in a cage like a box, so arranged that he cannot raise his hand to put anything in his mouth, cannot sit down or take any rest, but otherwise is unrestrained. This apparatus, with its occupant, is placed in a public thoroughfare for all to see, and the doomed man is tantalised by food being placed just out of his reach.

Gradually he gets weaker and weaker, but whenever he seems about to faint from exhaustion his gaolers thoughtfully prod him with their spears to keep him conscious. Sometimes the agony is increased by the starving criminal being given tiny quantities of water whenever the gaolers think that by so doing they can prolong his sufferings.

The average Chinese rather delight in witnessing the sufferings of those who are enclosed in these cages, and are not at all averse to taking their own meals in full view of the poor creature who would give anything he possessed to be permitted to consume the leavings of his more fortunate brethren.

By degrees the condemned man becomes exhausted, collapses become more frequent, and at last a prod from a spear is not sufficient to restore consciousness. Then the gaolers have recourse to thrusting splinters or burning matches beneath the fainting man's nails to awaken him to the full horror of his position. The crowd applauds vociferously when any enthusiastic gaoler manages to extort a cry of pain from the half-dead victim. At last, however, there comes a time when even burning will not elicit any sign of life, and the crowd, which has watched the execution at intervals for many days, shrugs its shoulders and says that the exhibition is over. This is a tame means of killing a man, when all is said and done, and, though in favour in some parts of China, is not nearly interesting enough to meet the wishes of the fiercer Chinese who dwell in the less civilised parts of the vast empire. Before leaving these tame means of carrying out the death sentence, however, we must make mention of one other mode which is ingenious and which serves the double purpose of causing madness before death. Thus certain offenders are put to death by the simple expedient of depriving them of sleep. Their pigtails are fastened to the wall, sharp spikes are placed beneath the chin, the elbows and the back of the knees, so that the instant the victim even commences to doze he is rudely awakened. Guards stand by to stir up the unfortunate wretch when he has been wounded by the spikes, lest his drowsiness should enable him to snatch a few moments' sleep in spite of the pain, or should render him insensible to the pricking. A very short course of this treatment suffices to completely break down the sufferer's mind; he becomes a lunatic, but a lunatic who can still feel pain and can suffer the dreadful oppression resulting from loss of sleep. Exhaustion, however, eventually has its way, and the poor creature dies. Justice or private malice is satisfied.

The Chinese, as a rule, look on death with comparative equanimity, and when sentenced to be beheaded treat the matter very philosophically. Indeed, it is no uncommon thing for them to laugh and joke all the way to the execution ground. The scene there will be described in a subsequent chapter on beheading. There are, however, several means of inflicting the extreme penalty which even the callous Chinese shudder at, methods so brutal and excruciatingly agonising and so ghastly that one would think no living man could be found to act as executioner. Indeed, we can only explain the fact that executioners are found by surmising that those selected for the office know that should they fail they would have themselves to pose as victims.

Struck by the ease with which a head was severed from the body, and by the merely momentary pain thus inflicted, some Chinaman, far back in the dim ages of the past, sought a means of adding torment to this mode of death. Apparently he was a bit of an anatomist, for he seems to have realised the fact that the farther away from the head the backbone is severed, the longer will be the agony of the victim. The first of the improved executions consisted in severing the body through the chest. Old records tell us that several executioners were so skilful that they could cut a man in two with one blow of the sword, and, wonderful as this feat appears to us, it must be remembered that the great general Shah Jehan was also accredited with being able to divide a man at one blow, much as the soldiers of the British army cut a sheep in two at displays of arms.

It then occurred to the Chinese masters in the art of brutality that little was gained by chopping a man in half in this way. If the body were divided through the thorax or chest the injury to the heart caused instant death; if the severance took place lower down, through the abdomen,

then there was only one bone to cut through, and much agony was spared the doomed. Obviously the ideal means of dividing the trunk would be through the hip bones, where the distance from the head at which the back-bone was severed would ensure the victim feeling every pang, and where there are plenty of bony structures to crash through, and thus enhance the agony. No man could be found strong enough to divide bones and flesh, so an instrument was devised which answered the purpose excellently. We give an illustration of it in operation.

The apparatus is simple enough to look at. On the floor are fastened two wooden blocks having a small space between them. The blocks have wider bases than summits, and in some species come to a sharp point, though this form was not in favour. At one end, working on a hinge, was a strong iron shaft bearing a huge blade, which sank between the blocks when the shaft lay along their tops. In fact, the whole apparatus resembled a gigantic tobacco cutter as much as anything else. At some distance on either side of this grim erection were huge rings, the use of which is plain. Now, let us witness an execution by means of this terrible implement.

The mandarin in power in the district is a superior one, and so has the right to inflict a variety of punishments somewhat out of the ordinary, and has selected this as his most horrible mode of slaying those who have offended him. Knowing, however, that familiarity breeds contempt in the Chinese more rapidly than in any other race on earth, he seldom treats the people to a glimpse of the hideous weapon, but reserves it for great occasions, and even then it is not always given to the public to witness the death of the malefactors.

To the accompaniment of drums, and preceded by flags and banners setting forth the various titles and dignities borne by the ruler, the mandarin is carried in his palankin to the execution ground, for he is going to give the populace a treat and satiate their thirst for blood.

In front of the governor's chair lies the horrible "tobacco cutter," its ponderous blade raised and propped up with a wedge. Then, at a word there is a movement in the crowd, and some soldiers appear dragging a Chinaman along. Until he reached the ground he was cheerful enough, for he believed that he was to be beheaded, but once his eye lit on the fearful instrument of death, he divined what his fate was to be, and his heart failed him. Struggling and uttering prayers to the mandarin to spare him, he is dragged to the block. Hurriedly he is stripped, and then he is laid across the sloping beams of wood. Still he struggles, but the guards overpower him. His hands are bound, and the end of the rope passed through the ring, similarly his feet are tied, and the confining cord also led through the ring on the opposite side of the block. Attendant executioners seize these ropes, while the chief butcher stands astride the victim and gives orders to pull on one side or to slacken on the other, carefully adjusting the body of the doomed Chinese till the very thickest and boniest part of the body lies right in the track of the murderous knife. Then the word is given, and the ropes are made fast. Useless is it for the wretched criminal to cry out or to struggle; he is stretched fair and square right in the very jaws of death—ay, and of death in one of its most hideous forms.

The assistant executioners raise the iron shears slightly, and the wedge is withdrawn. The heavy beam is lowered till the blade almost touches the flesh, down which great drops of perspiration pour, started by the mental agony of anticipation within the victim's breast.

All look to the mandarin, awaiting the signal.

"Is it to be fast or slow?" ask the spectators, and already the sporting Chinese have commenced to gamble on the decision of the governor. There is only time for a few bets to be taken when the hand of the great man is seen to move slowly downwards. It is to be slow death.

The executioners commence to lower the shears. Now the blade touches the flesh, now it slightly indents it, now the pressure has caused a slight cut.

The wretched convict shrieks aloud in his fear, for as yet he has hardly felt any pain. Slowly the ponderous blade descends, now it has reached the edge of the hip bone, and its weight is no longer sufficient to carry it further. The executioners commence to press on the lever. By fractions of an inch the merciless steel crushes through the bone, causing excruciating agony. The convict's eyeballs start from their sockets, his face becomes ashen. Will he lose consciousness? No, he is not to be spared a jot of the meed of suffering which has been ordained. The chief executioner has noticed symptoms of collapse, and at a signal from him the blade stops its onward movement, while the convict is revived. Then the movement is continued. Pressure on the intestines increases till it becomes severance, and at last the bloody executioner perceives that the backbone is reached. If this were severed slowly, unconsciousness would supervene, so he stops the ghastly work for a few minutes while restoratives are administered. Bathed in perspiration, with staring, bloodshot eyes and drawn face, the victim lies beneath the cruel blade, now more than half way through his vitals. It would be a mercy to leave him unmolested while the knife pursues its way, for his sufferings would be at an end; but that would not suit Chinese justice. He is brought back to consciousness as far as is possible, that he may experience to the full the torment to which he has been condemned. Then, while the people stand breathless, the executioners throw all their weight on the beam, and the great knife crashes through the spine some four inches from its end. The victim loses consciousness, but the chief ruffian attempts to revive him before he gives the word for the shears to be raised again. He is partially successful in his efforts, and the dying Chinaman recovers sufficiently to utter one heartrending shriek ere he expires. The beam is lifted, the blood gushes forth over everything—the populace is delighted.

But there is another to die. He has graciously been permitted to watch the torments of his companion in sorrow, and now he is stretched on the bloodstained block and adjusted. The hot sun has tired the mandarin, and he has given the signal for a rapid despatch. Down comes the weighty knife, shearing through flesh and bone, and in an instant the half of a man lies squirming on the ground. He is left to die while yet a third is bound on the fatal block and despatched. Then the mandarin retires, amid the applause of the people, who realise the worth of his smile and the weight of his frown.

One would have thought that with this mode of execution the limit of human brutality had been reached, and that even that would never have been permitted in a land which boasts that it is the most enlightened of all countries; but, alas! the subtle brain of the Chinaman has devised an even more barbarous mode of execution, as many unfortunate Europeans have learnt, to their cost. This super-brutal form of inflicting the death penalty is known as the "Thousand Cuts."

The Boxers, whom we heard so much about a few years ago, made use of this inhuman mode of execution, though in most instances they only employed it when the death of a compatriot enemy was to be compassed. In fact, by many it is believed that the "Thousand Cuts" was invented by the Boxers, and that that nefarious society has existed from very remote times. At any rate, it is certain that it was only employed by the most fanatical of all the Chinese, whether they belonged to the Boxer sect or not. An execution by the "Thousand Cuts" presented a spectacle which would satisfy the veriest ghoul, so ghastly was it to witness. Come with me in imagination to the plot of ground outside a Boxers' camp and look on while the fanatical warriors revel in blood.

The very plot of ground reeks of blood; a sickening stench fills the air, such as comes from badly-kept slaughter-houses. Here and there our feet slip, and with horror we remember that the slime which nearly made us fall was once the life-blood of a human being. In the centre of a patch of clay that was once covered with grass, but is now baked by the sun, and here and there stained a dark brown by the blood of victims to the blood lust of the Boxers, stands a pole, firmly imbedded in the ground. At some little distance around this stand crowds of people kept in their places by a few Boxer soldiers, who prod the too eager with their swords, driving them back as if they were cattle. In the open space is a tall Chinaman. He is brandishing a heavy sword, swishing it through the air as if it were as light as a riding-cane; but if we were to handle the weapon we should find that it was really exceedingly heavy. He is the executioner, and many a time have the people witnessed his prowess. However, to-day is to be a special day with him, for the "Thousand Cuts" is to be administered, and he knows that the people will criticise him keenly. He revels in praise, and to-day he hopes to earn it.

On our ears falls the sound of the everlasting drums, the only delight of the Chinese, and from the camp there comes a small procession, guarding the prisoner who is to suffer the most painful kind of death imaginable. He is surrounded by guards, and near him walk a few relations, who strive to comfort him. The open space is soon reached, and the victim is handed over to the tender mercies of the executioner. At a word from him the assistants seize the convict and commence to bind his hands together. Then they raise his arms above his head and secure him to the top of the post by his wrists, other assistants fastening his ankles to the foot of the pillar. While this has been going on the relatives have been

SLICING IN TWO.

A Chinese Method of Execution.

speaking earnestly to the executioner, and a small bag of coin has been handed from one to the other. The relations have retired, looking more satisfied; the executioner, having stowed the money away in his belt, smiles grimly and balances his sword.

He is then told that the victim is prepared for the slaughter, and he looks to the head man for the signal. One ruffian, looking even more villainous than his fellows, intimates that the execution may begin, and the herculean butcher advances, whirling the sword round his head. It flashes through the air, and the next second a flake of flesh falls on the ground, while a long, red strip on the left arm shows from whence it came. Looking pleased with the decorative result of the red blood on the yellow skin, the executioner again approaches his victim. This time the right arm is slightly scarred. Then two successive slices take strips off the legs. A fresh sword is brought, and after an exhibition of balancing the skilful executioner whips off the two ears with two rapid strokes, so swift that the eye cannot follow his keen blade.

In the crowd the relations murmur that the butcher is not a man of his word, and are comforted by their acquaintances with the assurance that no executioners are, and very few Boxers.

Changing his tactics, the swordsman proceeds to treat the people to a brilliant display of swordsmanship. The long, keen blade flickers to and fro apparently unceasingly, and then is cast into the air by the performer. He takes a sponge, wipes the breast and stomach of the poor convict, and it is seen that from his shoulders to his navel he is scored with tiny lines, giving the effect of shading; but the public know that each line is a cut, and no single cut is more than the sixteenth of an inch in depth. The regularity and precision with which this piece of etching on human flesh has been performed is truly marvellous.

At this point there is a short interval while the executioner rests, and restoratives are given to the condemned, who is half dead from fear, for no serious wound has as yet been inflicted.

Then the "entertainment" is resumed. A longer and heavier sword is selected this time, and amid a flicker of steel five fingers are seen to fall around the post. After another interval the five from the poor convict's left hand similarly are severed. To please the people the swordsman next deftly splits the criminal's nose from root to tip, laying each half flat on the face. Only then does the sufferer utter his first cry. An eyelid is next detached, and the eyeball left exposed as cleanly as if done by a surgeon. The hot sun streams down on the victim, now masked in blood, and a halt is called "for refreshment."

As yet not one-half of the thousand cuts has been administered, and the relatives of the doomed man are most indignant, for they had been promised that their dear one should die at the first blow. For the executioner the present is too good an opportunity to gain renown to be missed, and as he selects a fresh weapon he turns over in his mind any variation which he could introduce into the monotony of the scene. The toes are chopped off by a wonderful series of underhand strokes, the palms of the hands scored, the arms scarified, the while the victim utters pitiful yells. To survey his work properly the assistants are ordered by the executioner to sponge the culprit. This they do with a mixture of vinegar and water, and the smart of the acid doubles the poor creature's agony, and he yells aloud, imploring the butcher to make an end of him. Noticing that as yet the sides have not been decorated, the brutal Boxer again advances, and with lightning rapidity scores a couple of dozen vertical lines on each side. Then he makes a carbonado of the thighs, and chips tiny pieces out of the calves. Again he is blinded by the blood which streams sluggishly down the body of his victim, for only the smallest capillaries have been cut. To look at him now one would say that there was not a whole spot on the unfortunate criminal's body. Satisfied that he has done his work in a masterly manner, the executioner then commences to slice strips of flesh off the poor man with deft strokes. Great flakes fly into the air, accompanied by spurts of blood, for now the deeper structures are reached. Then, with a slash, the abdomen is opened and the viscera tumble out, presenting a ghastly spectacle. The crowd roars with delight, and the victim at last loses consciousness. Then the executioner realises that, however skilfully he may now do his work, his efforts cannot be appreciated, for the blood, which gushes in fountains from every artery, obscures his most prized effects, and with a masterly stroke he divides the body into two parts from the skull to the fork. The populace applauds the performer, and he retired covered with blood and honour. The execution is at an end. Sickened, we also will leave this revolting scene.

There is little doubt that this ghastly form of brutality is still practised in parts of China remote from European influence, for it only wants a little encouragement on the part of the white man for it again to become popular in the littoral regions.

IN A FRENCH COURT of JUSTICE

SHE is a pretty, lively, flashily-dressed, saucy-looking grisette. She takes her place with a little shrug of the shoulders and a grimace, and looks about coquettishly. The judge eyes her sharply for a moment, and then asks what she is charged with. "Mademoiselle, Monsieur le Juge, is charged with stealing a fifty-franc note from her most intimate and confidential friend." Information as to mademoiselle's antecedents and position is at once forthcoming. Mademoiselle's name is Adrienne Petitbouche; she trims hats for the great Madame Picot by day; she flirts with her neighbour Jacques by twilight; she literally "shakes a foot," and a lithe body, too, every night at the Bal de la Terpsichore Divine—admission, one franc. On the whole, barring her daily task, she has a very careless, merry, wicked, delirious life of it. Her money melts like snow in a furnace; she often finds herself minus the cash for a new dancing-skirt, and, unhappily, Jacques is too poor to supply it. She, therefore, slips quietly into her darling Philoméne's room, opposite to her own, and quietly abstracts the fifty-franc note which Philoméne has just received as her monthly wages, and has stowed away in her trunk. Philoméne catches her coming out of the door, misses her fifty francs, and has dear Adrienne brought up before the court. Philoméne is the first witness, and skips to the witness-box, brisk, prompt, and pert. Questioned indiscriminately by judge, jury, procureur, counsel, and prisoner, she answers smartly, with tosses of her head. She saw Mademoiselle Adrienne coming out of the room; her trunk was open; on the floor near it was Mademoiselle Adrienne's new silver thimble. Here the prisoner breaks in:

"Yes; the hussy borrowed it of me the day before yesterday."

"It's a lie! I didn't—you know I didn't!"

"Monsieur le Juge——"

"Now, hush, hush, hush!" (from the judge).

"Go on, witness."

"The concierge saw her going into my room just before."

"Aha, m'amie!" breaks in the judge, "what do you say to that?"

"I went in there," says the prisoner shortly, "because I thought somebody was there; I heard a noise."

Judge: "Yes; the rustle of fifty-franc notes!" (Great laughter.)

A witness deposes that, next day, Mademoiselle Adrienne bought a handsome new bonnet.

"And where, m'amie," said the judge, "did you get all the money for that?"

"One has friends."

"Come, come! Where did you get it?"

"Parbleu! it was Jacques."

"And who, pray, is Jacques?"

"My Jacques—my friend, monsieur."

"Oh, your lover, n'est-ce pas?"

"Ah, well—yes, Monsieur le Juge!"

"And so Jacques is rich, is he? Has his rich aunt just died?" (General amusement.)

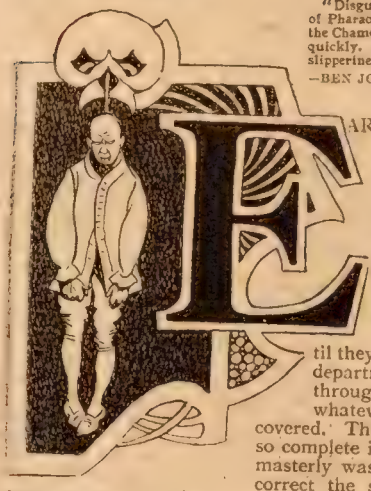
For all her bright eyes and pretty little shrugs, poor Adrienne is clearly guilty. The judge, after stating the fact, proceeds to sentence her, somewhat after this manner:

"Now, ma jolie petite fille, I must send you to lodgings where fine bonnets are wholly needless; you must go to the workhouse for a little month. You won't want any of Jacques's money for that. And I warn you not to mind whatever noises you may hear, or run after them; for, you see what a position you are in from being too anxious about noises in your neighbour's room." With this sally, the trial ends, and the proceedings are concluded in the pleasantest of humours. Mademoiselle trips, with another shrug, out of the box, gives the disconsolate Jacques, who is by, a hearty kiss, bobs her head saucily at the judge, and surrenders herself gracefully to her fate.

THE KING of FORGERS

The extraordinary career of CHARLES PRICE, nicknamed OLD PATCH, who forged thousands of bank-notes, baffled for years all attempts to capture him, and cheated the gallows after all.

"Disguises! quotha. By the foot of Pharaoh, he hath as many hues as the Chameleon and changeth them as quickly. The eel hath not his slipperiness nor the fox his cunning."
—BEN JONSON, "Every Man in his Humour."



EARLY in the year 1780 the directors of the Bank of England became aware that a large number of spurious notes were in circulation, so beautifully executed that they passed current without any suspicion until they arrived at a certain department of the Bank through which no forgery whatever can pass undiscovered. The forged notes were so complete in all their parts, so masterly was the engraving, so correct the signatures, so skilfully imitated the water-mark that when presented at the Bank they were promptly paid, and it was not till they reached the department to which we have referred that they were found to be forgeries. There were long consultations with the police, and Clarke, the cleverest detective of his time, went like a sleuth hound on the track of the forger. But though he always succeeded in tracing the forged notes as far as the lottery offices, he lost the trail there, and he had to admit that he was utterly baffled.

Now, it may be necessary, perhaps, to state for the enlightenment of some of our readers, that lotteries were then common tricks of finance, sanctioned by the State, from which the Crown derived a large annual revenue. They were established in 1693, and not abolished until 1826. There was a tremendous run upon these lotteries, the prizes in which were often of the value of several thousand pounds, and amongst the swarms of people who rushed to the lottery offices to purchase tickets it was, of course, impossible to identify any one person as the passer of any particular note or notes. The directors of the Bank of England were in despair, and, as the number of forged notes increased rapidly, until there must have been some thousands in circulation, the loss became very serious indeed, for the spurious notes had all been presented and paid before their real character was discovered. At first it was the opinion of the police officers engaged in the case that the forgeries were the work of a considerable gang, under the direction of one leading spirit. But, at last, after the most minute and careful investigation, they came to the conclusion that there was "only one man in it." The notes were traced in every quarter to have proceeded from one person, always disguised and always inaccessible. Finally a reward of £200 was offered for any information which would lead to the apprehension of a person answering to the following description:

"He appears about fifty years of age, about five feet six inches high, stout made, very sallow complexion, dark eyes and eyebrows, speaks, in general, very deliberately, with a foreign accent; has worn a black patch over his left eye, tied with a string round his head, sometimes wears a white wig, his hat flapped before, and nearly so at the sides, a brown camlet great-coat, buttons of the same, with a large cape, which he always wears so as to cover the lower part of his face; appears to have very thick legs, which hang over his shoes as if swelled; his shoes are very broad at the toes, and little narrow old-fashioned buckles, black stocking breeches, walks with a short crutch-stick with an ivory head, stoops or affects to stoop very much, and walks slow as if infirm. He had lately hired many hackney coaches in different parts of the town, and been frequently set down in or near Portland Place, in which neighbourhood it is supposed he lodges.

"He is connected with a woman, who answers the following description: She is rather tall and genteel, thin face and person, about thirty years of age, light hair, rather a yellow cast on her face, and pitted with the small-pox, a downcast look, speaks very slow, sometimes wears a coloured linen jacket and petticoat, and sometimes a white one, a small black bonnet and a black cloak, and assumes the character of a lady's-maid.

"N.B.—It is said that about fifteen months ago he lodged at Mrs. Parker's, No. 40, in Great Titchfield Street (who is since dead), at which time he went by the name of Wigmore."

This notice was posted on the walls, and printed in the form of a handbill it was delivered from house to house throughout the whole of the quarter in which it was suspected that this mysterious forger resided. He was no doubt alarmed at the notoriety he had gained, and for a time there was a cessation of the forgeries, but not the slightest clue was obtained as to the whereabouts or the identity of this slippery gentleman, whom the public christened "Old Patch," from the fact of his being described as wearing a patch, and in whom it took almost as lively an interest as Jack the Ripper has excited among the public of our own day.

After the lapse of a few months, however, the forged notes began to crop up in greater numbers than ever, and the directors of the Bank of England realised with dismay that Old Patch was at his work again. Once more Clarke, assisted by several other detectives, went on the track of the forger, and, as before, they traced the notes invariably to the lottery offices, but could not get a step beyond that. The extraordinary cunning and fertility of resource of this clever rogue, whoever he might be, completely baffled them. He had evidently assumed new disguises, and was uttering his spurious notes by thousands under the very noses of the police, and yet they could not, for the life of them, lay their hands upon him. The man must be a genius. No such bold and skilful forger had ever before been known in the annals of crime. The great mystery of the hour—the problem that no man could solve—the question no one could answer, was "Who is Old Patch?" Many refused to believe that one man could, unaided, put such a number of forged notes in circulation. He must have many accomplices, they argued. But the detectives still stuck to their theory that there was only one man in it.

For three years the mysterious forger baffled all the efforts of the blood-hounds of the law to trace him, but suddenly all London was startled and excited by the announcement that a most important arrest had been made in connection with the forged notes, and that it was believed the police had got their hands upon Old Patch at last. There was some disappointment, however, when it was discovered that the person arrested was but a young man, scarcely more than a lad, and of no higher grade than a servant. The name of the youth was Samuel Denton. He had negotiated a £50 forged note at a well-known lottery office, that of Brooksbank and Ruddle, and on being asked by the cashier with whom he lived, he replied that he was servant to a very rich nobleman's guardian, that he was at board wages, and gave his address at his previous master's, a musical instrument maker, in the Strand. Three days later that £50 note was found to be a forgery, and was traced back to Brooksbank and Ruddle's. The cashier remembered the young man whom he had interrogated, immediate application was made to Bow Street, and before the week was out Samuel Denton was safely lodged in Tothill Fields bridewell.

On learning that he was arrested on a charge of forging and passing counterfeit bank-notes, a crime for which, if proved against him, he would certainly swing, Samuel Denton's horror and astonishment were apparently so genuine that even the belief of the police in his guilt was for the moment shaken. He protested his innocence in tones of pitiable anguish. But the story which he told of his connection with the forger was so extraordinary and improbable that it was some time before the police and the magistrate before whom he was brought would accept it as true. The story which Samuel Denton told was as follows:

He said that just previous to the drawing of the lottery for the year 1780, he saw in the "Daily Advertiser" an advertisement for a servant who had been used to live with a

single gentleman, and applicants were to apply to "C. C., Marlborough Street Coffee House, Broad Street, Carnaby Market." Having read the advertisement, Samuel, who was then assistant to a musical instrument maker in the Strand, answered it by letter. At the end of a week, one evening about dusk, a coachman inquired at the musical instrument maker's for the person who had answered the advertisement, saying there was a gentleman over the way in a coach, who wanted to speak with him. Samuel went to the coach, was desired to step in, and then saw an apparently aged foreigner, gouty, wrapped up with fur and with six yards of flannel about his legs, a camlet surtout buttoned up over his chin, close to his mouth, a large patch over his left eye, and every part of his face concealed except his nose, right eye, and a small part of that cheek. This, it must be remembered, was some time previous to the issue of the police notice already quoted. The elderly gentleman affected great age, with a faint hectic cough, and so much bodily infirmity as almost to disable him from getting out of the coach. Samuel guessed him to be at least seventy years of age, and when he saw him standing reckoned his height to be close on six feet. Moreover, he gave the young man the idea of being exceptionally thin and lank. After making minute inquiries as to Samuel's previous life, and having the musical instrument maker called up to the coach to give the young man a character, the strange gentleman expressed himself satisfied, engaged Samuel at eighteen shillings a week, and directed him to present himself two days later at No. 39, Titchfield Street, Oxford Street, and ask for Mr. Brank.

CHARLES PRICE,
The King of Forgers.
From an Old Engraving.

Samuel duly appeared on the appointed day, and entered upon his duties. The old gentleman had already informed Denton that he was not wanted by himself (Mr. Brank), but as under-servant to a young nobleman of fortune, under age, and then in Bedfordshire, to whom he (Mr. Brank) was and had been for some years guardian. Mr. Brank now further revealed to Samuel that this nobleman was a most whimsical, eccentric person, given to the most reckless and prodigal expenditure, which his guardian tried hard, but not always successfully, to check. This young nobleman's chief craze was for squandering his money on lottery tickets, and in this folly Mr. Brank was compelled to humour him, at any rate, up to a certain extent. Samuel was then informed that his principal duty would be to purchase these tickets.

On the following day Mr. Brank procured some bank-notes, and gave Samuel two, one of twenty, the other of forty pounds. He directed the servant to take their numbers and dates on a piece of paper for fear of losing them, and to go to the lottery office in the Haymarket, and with the twenty-pound note to purchase an eight-guinea chance. From there he was to go to the corner of Bridge Street, Westminster, to buy another chance out of the forty-pound note, and wait at the door of the Parliament Street coffee-house till Mr. Brank came to him. Samuel bought the tickets as directed and was on his way with the change from the notes to the Parliament Street coffee-house, when from the opposite of the way he was hailed from a hackney coach by Mr. Brank, who complimented him on his speed, and said that owing to Samuel's quickness he had not had time to get to the coffee-house.

Finding that his new servant was quick and trustworthy, Mr. Brank soon entrusted him with larger sums. Notes to the value of four or five hundred pounds were daily given to Samuel to negotiate in the manner described. When Mr. Brank gave Samuel the notes, he gave him at the same time as many canvas bags as he was ordered to buy shares, with strict directions to put each distinct share and the balance of each note into a separate bag, for fear, as the old gentleman plausibly explained, that the chance of one office might be confused with that of another, and Samuel thereby be puzzled to know where he had bought the different tickets, and by such confusion or forgetfulness, it might not be recollected where to apply in case of a fortunate number being drawn.

It was a matter of some surprise to Samuel at first that whenever he was returning with the proceeds of his purchases at the lottery offices he was invariably overtaken or met before he had reached home by his master in a hackney-coach, who took the money from him, complimented him on his punctuality and despatch, and now and then presented him with a guinea. But the worthy and unsuspecting Samuel would probably have been a good deal more surprised had he known that the moment he left his master's house to buy tickets a mysterious female figure dogged his steps, never losing sight of him, waiting at the door of each lottery office, and peering cautiously in at the window until he came out, haunting him like his shadow, and never quitting him until she saw him safely in the company of his employer, and knew that her duty was at an end. This merry little game went on without a check until Samuel suddenly found himself laid by the heels in Tothill Fields bridewell, and learned for the first time that he had been actively assisting in the perpetration of a crime for which the penalty was death, without benefit of clergy. Then, terrified beyond measure, he told the extraordinary story we have just given. Little credence was given to it at first, but finally, after several severe and searching examinations before the magistrates, it was thought that perhaps, after all, the young man might be telling the truth, and it was deemed possible that with his assistance the master rogue who had employed him might yet be trapped.

"THE KING OF FORGERS."
Disguised as "Old Patch."
From an Old Engraving.

First of all it was necessary to put Mr. Brank off his guard. Up to this time the fact of Samuel Denton's arrest had been kept a profound secret; it was not till later that the announcement appeared in the papers. Consequently, that artful gentleman was wholly unaware of what had happened to his servant. When last he parted from his master, Samuel was informed that he might not be wanted again for a week, and that he might, therefore, wait until he was sent for. It was resolved to lay a trap for Mr. Brank, in which it was confidently expected that he would be neatly caught. A Bow Street officer was stationed at the musical

instrument maker's in the Strand, where Samuel still resided, with instructions to watch for Brank in case he should call or send for his servant. After the lapse of a few days, Mr. Brank sent Samuel a message to meet him the next day at Mill's coffee-house, at eleven o'clock exactly.

The officials at Bow Street chuckled when they heard the good news, and thought that now, at last, they had the notorious scoundrel safe in their toils. Samuel was instructed to comply with his master's orders, but not to go till five minutes past the time. The Bow Street officer, disguised as a porter, with a knot on his shoulder, and Mr. Bond, the chief clerk at Bow Street, dressed as a lady, accompanied Samuel, following at a discreet distance.

When Denton arrived at the coffee-house, he found that a real porter had that instant been there and inquired for him, and had left scarcely a moment before. Samuel instantly communicated the information to the "lady" who

and printed in newspapers, handbills were showered around in thousands, but all to no purpose. Mr. Brank had vanished, and left not a trace behind him. It was not thought politic, however, to set Samuel at liberty just yet, and he was kept in durance for eleven months, at the end of which period, as there no longer seemed any reason to doubt that he was innocent of any knowledge of the spurious character of the notes he had been passing, he was discharged, with a present of twenty pounds to compensate him for his long incarceration. Rather an inadequate compensation, it seems to us.

Meanwhile Old Patch undaunted by his narrow escape, continued the same game of purchasing lottery tickets with notes of higher value. He had engaged another young man in Samuel's place. This youth was taken into custody, another rush was made by the police, and again the artful rogue was missed by a moment.

"I ARREST YOU IN THE KING'S NAME."

followed him; it was but half a minute that they were in conference, but that half minute was fatal. Mr. Brank, who was looking out of the window of a hackney-coach, about a hundred yards off, witnessed the brief colloquy between Samuel and the "lady," guessed at once that his servant had betrayed him, and was driven swiftly away, whilst Samuel retired to the coffee-house to wait. After a quarter of an hour's fruitless waiting, Mr. Bond suspected that his prey had escaped him, and jumping into a hackney-coach with the officer and Samuel, drove post-haste to Titchfield Street. But it was too late, the bird had flown, had not been there, in fact, for a week, and, though the house was searched from top to bottom, not the faintest trace of anything that could possibly have any connection with the manufacture of the forged notes, was discovered. Clearly, Old Patch was too clever for the police, and once more, to their intense mortification, they found themselves completely baffled. Advertisements were posted on the walls

Space would fail us to enumerate even in the briefest manner the various devices by which Old Patch palmed off his spurious notes upon the public. At one time he engaged two assistants in the linen-drapery business, and made extensive purchases in that line of goods, receiving change for notes of large amount. At another time he posed as a buyer of diamonds. His disguises were so numerous and so clever that all the efforts of the police failed to track him to his lair.

For six years, incredible as it may seem, with the hue-and-cry out after him, this wonderful rascal continued his carcer of crime unchecked, and his gains must have been enormous. The extraordinary thing was that he did not retire upon the proceeds of his forgeries, which were enough to have kept him in opulence for the rest of his life, instead of tempting fortune further. But perhaps the excitement of crime was necessary to him, and, like the inveterate gambler, he could not make up his mind to be content with the spoils

he had already won. At any rate, his ingenuity was inexhaustible, and he gave it free play.

Elated with the success which had attended his manipulation of bank-notes, he at last turned to another form of forgery, equally artful and for a time equally successful. He went to the coffee-houses near the Royal Exchange in a new disguise, and engaged a boy to take a sum of £10 to the Bank, with directions to receive from the teller the customary ticket to the cashier who pays; but the lad had special orders not to go to the cashier for the money, as the teller directed him to do, but, as soon as he was out of the teller's sight, he was to turn another way, and bring the ticket to his employer, Old Patch, at the coffee-house. There the ingenious rascal used to alter the teller's tickets from £10 to £100

He hanged himself in his cell.

by adding an 0, or by placing a 1 before any other sum where the addition was easy, so as to make, for example, 50 into 150, and then send the tickets by other hands to the cashier, who paid the increased sums without the slightest suspicion.

But Old Patch had now come to the end of his tether, and this audacious scheme of robbery was his last. One of the notes he had received at the Bank on a forged ticket was traced to a pawnbroker named Aldous, in Berwick Street. Aldous said he had received it from an old and constant customer of his, a Mr. Powell, who usually called two or three times a week to pledge articles of value. A Bow Street officer was stationed at the pawnbroker's, and the next visit of Mr. Powell was awaited with intense anxiety. On the afternoon of January 14th, 1786, a dapper, well-dressed gentleman of fashionable appearance, about 5 feet 6 inches in height, with aquiline nose and small grey eyes, walked briskly into Aldous's shop and rapped on the counter with his tasselled cane.

"Here he is!" whispered the pawnbroker to the Bow Street officer and the latter slipped quietly round to cut off the escape of his prey.

Mr. Aldous stepped forward to wait on his customer. Mr. Powell greeted him cordially, and was about to open negotiations, as usual, when, with a click-snap the swinging door closed behind him, and, turning, he found himself confronted by a powerful, determined-looking man, who, producing his staff, said:

"I am a Bow Street officer, and I arrest you in the King's name on a charge of forgery."

Mr. Powell's outburst of virtuous indignation must have been a sight worth seeing. His acting was superb. In tones of thunder he threatened his captor with an action for assault and false imprisonment if he dared to detain him. But the Bow Street officer was firm as adamant. A hackney-coach was sent for; Mr. Powell was handcuffed and taken at once before the sitting magistrate at Bow Street. The police, after six years' pursuit, had hunted down their quarry at last, and Old Patch's career was at an end.

Gradually the whole history of this extraordinary man and unparalleled rogue was unfolded. His real name was Charles Price, and he was the son of a tailor in South Wales. He had come up as a lad to London about the year 1762, and from his earliest years was an accomplished swindler and thief. The story of his various ingenious schemes of fraud would fill a volume, but we are only concerned here with his forgery of Bank of England notes.

Before taking up this branch of crime, he had been lottery-office keeper and stockbroker gambled in the Alley, and was ruined, squandered the ample fortune he had obtained with his wife, an excellent woman of good family, who had borne him eight children, and then, having no means wherewith to support himself, turned his attention to the production of spurious Bank of England notes. In this bold venture he was wholly unassisted. He engraved his own plates, made his own paper, with the water mark, and even manufactured his own ink. His only confidante was his mistress, Mrs. Pounteney, the woman already referred to, who was an aunt of his wife's, though the latter was completely ignorant of the connection between them. The lawful Mrs. Price was as unconscious of her husband's crimes as of his liaison, and his arrest on a charge of forgery came like a thunderbolt upon her.

Price was committed to Tothill Fields bridewell, but contrived to get a letter smuggled through by his son, who was allowed to visit him, to Mrs. Pounteney, directing her to destroy everything that could implicate him. She faithfully carried out her paramour's instructions. All his disguises were burnt and every implement used in his forgeries was so completely destroyed that not a single article could be brought in evidence against him. Moreover, from the extreme care and skill with which he had concocted his various disguises there was no connected proof of his identity. The utmost that any witness would swear to was his voice, and so difficult was it to obtain sufficient proof of his identity with the person who had committed the numerous forgeries that Price grew insolent and audacious in his demeanour before the magistrates at his several examinations, and even called some of his own dupes to bear witness in his favour.

Nevertheless, the chain of evidence was being slowly but surely strengthened, and the wretched man, finding that the game was up, hanged himself in his cell. In his waistcoat were found certain papers, written just before he committed suicide, in which he solemnly denied everything laid to his charge.

A verdict of felo-de-se was returned by the coroner's jury, and Charles Price was buried at midnight, where four cross-roads meet, with a stake thrust through his body. A few days after his burial it was found that the grave had been opened and the body secretly removed, no one knew whither. But it was believed that it was his widow who had paid this last act of devotion to the husband who had so shamefully deceived her.

It was computed that Price must have amassed something like two hundred thousand pounds by his forgeries. But what he did with all that money, and how he got rid of it, remains a mystery to this day, for he was not a man given to extravagant vices or to ostentatious living.

Such, then, was the end of Charles Price, commonly called "Old Patch," one of the cleverest and most successful scoundrels that ever lived, and most assuredly the king of all forgers since the world began.

The Story of Governor Picton & Louis Calderon.

"All mankind, being exposed to the attempts of violence and perfidy, detest the crimes of which they may possibly be the victims; all desire that the principal offender and his accomplices may be punished; nevertheless, there is a natural compassion in the human heart which makes all men detest the cruelty of torturing the accused into confession."

—VOLTAIRE.

IN these enlightened, or, at least, comparatively enlightened, days, the cruelty and injustice of the application of the torture to extort confession cannot but be universally admitted. As a contrast to the good old times, we now treat persons accused of crime as innocent until the inexorable voice of the law has pronounced them to be guilty. The innate wickedness of compelling a person, by means of the direst physical pain, to confess to a deed of which he may be entirely innocent, must be apparent to the meanest intelligence. How many men would have the strength of body and the fortitude of mind to deny their guilt, if they knew that a false confession would save them from the excruciating agonies of the rack or the frightful pangs of the iron maiden? If this applies to the male portion of frail humanity, how much more does it to the tender sex! Women are not all Mercias to go to the lions or the stake on behalf of the eternal truth. They are but weak vessels in the hands of mankind, and are entitled to proportionately tender treatment. I am not a believer altogether in the abolition of capital punishment, but I sincerely hope to live to see the day when the execution of women shall be as obsolete as burning at the stake or any other barbarous custom.

Thomas Picton, Esquire, was, in 1806, indicted for applying the torture to Louisa Calderon, in order to extort a confession. That sounds terrible enough; but, though Picton's methods were wrong and his use of a savage law indefensible, yet one must not forget to render justice, and to bear in mind that there were certain circumstances to be advanced in extenuation of his treatment of this girl. The reader, however, shall be put in possession of all the particulars, and shall then judge for himself how far Governor Picton's final exoneration was justified or the reverse.

The offence with which he was afterwards charged took place in the island of Trinidad, in the West Indies. I may premise by stating that in the year 1797 this island surrendered to the British, under the generalship of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, and that excellent soldier and good man entered into a stipulation, by which he conceded to the inhabitants a continuation of their laws, and appointed a new governor until his Majesty's pleasure should be known. In other words, the native laws should be maintained until the king should extend to this new acquisition to his empire all the sacred privileges of those laws by which England herself is governed. Picton, however, himself admitted afterwards that the system of jurisprudence adopted under the rule of the Spanish sovereign for his colonial establishments was benignant, and adapted to the protection of the subject, previous to the surrender of this island to the British arms.

And now for our heroine. It cannot be said that even in 1904 Trinidad is the most moral and straight-laced place in the world; but, if that cannot be said of it with truth now, with even less veracity could such a high character be claimed for the Trinidad of one hundred years ago. Girls mature in that climate at a very early age—those of Spanish extraction, I mean—and, in any case, I am sceptical as to whether the men care much whether the little dears are matured or not. Lips are as red and ripe at twelve years of age as at seventeen, and eyes sparkle just as brilliantly. The lovely olive complexion and the creamy skin are just as valuable assets to the more or less bashful maiden of thirteen as to her staid sister of twenty. A Trinidad woman looks old at twenty-five, and ancient at thirty. At thirty-five she might as well expire, for she is no longer either of use or ornament, and the men, for whose glances she has lived, will have none of her. Youth is glorified in Trinidad, and middle-age is almost a crime. It is certainly a crime in a once pretty woman.

Rather loose customs prevailed in the Trinidad of 1801. Little girls of the most tender age were either legally married or lived openly with men as their mistresses. A ten-year-old maiden was almost a rarity, like a black tulip or a blue rose. In December, 1801, when this event happened, Louisa Calderon was only ten years old. Yet she had been living in concubinage—her birth and condition having prevented her entering a more honourable state—with a man for six months. The notion is highly unpleasant to our fastidious minds, but I am obliged to labour the point in order to make my narrative clear to the reader.

But, in spite of her youth, Louisa Calderon was quite a little woman, and, if contemporary history can be believed, a very dainty morsel indeed. The Spanish dons—dark, sinister, forbidding—smacked their lips at the thought of her. She had long raven tresses and bright black-blue eyes, heavily fringed with sombre lashes. What eyes! They lit up the whole face as the stars light the canopy of heaven. However, one did not think of heaven when one looked into those eyes. There was little of the angel about pretty Louisa Calderon. Swinburne might have had this precocious mite in his mind's eye when he wrote the cynical lines:

> "A suckling of his brood you were,
> One hard to wean;
> But God, who lost you, left you fair
> Faustine!"

She had a spirituelle little figure—another pennyweight of soft, satin flesh would have spoilt her—and the whitest of pearly teeth. Certainly one would be no more willing to slash and mar a beautiful painting than to torture the prettyness and shapeliness out of the frail little body of Louisa Calderon. One might have enjoyed spanking her—but torture! Fie, Governor Picton, fie!

The Calderon was a very naughty little girl. She had, to begin with, the disadvantages of illegitimate birth. Her father was a Spanish officer of high rank—if her mother was to be believed—but I imagine that he had a great many children wandering about the island, like Japhet, in search of a father, and he certainly never displayed any inclination to acknowledge this one. Her mother died—she was old and ugly at twenty-four—when Louisa was six, and some charitably-disposed persons took spasmodic care of the pretty child. At nine years of age she caught the libidinous eye of a wealthy Spaniard named Pedro Ruiz, and she at once perceived an opportunity to make herself independent of her humble protectors. The stern-looking Ruiz used to take her on his anything but fatherly knee, and, transition being rapid from that stage, the love-affair of the ten-year-old Louisa and the thirty-year-old Pedro prospered exceedingly. He offered her a home, on the usual conditions, and, having no scruples of conscience, and modesty being a plant unsuited to that climate and not encouraged to grow on the island, she accepted the offer with much show of gratitude. She was installed at the Ruiz mansion, and enjoyed herself very much as a peacock does, proud of his own fine feathers as he airs himself in the genial sunshine. Torture poor, pretty, naughty Louisa! Fie, Governor Picton, fie!

To this abode of the "fair and irretrievably frail" used to come one Carlos Gonzales, the friend and good comrade of Pedro Ruiz.

"I have a new mistress, Carlo," Pedro had remarked one day, in the tone of an English squire announcing the purchase of a new hunter. "Come and see her."

Carlos was nothing loth. He expended all his energy and time in the pursuit of girls. Sometimes the game were shy and sport poor. Often it was very good. But Carlos was the "real thing" in hunters, and he took good sport

or poor with equal equanimity, gloating over such trophies of the chase as he possessed in the shape of love-letters, silken garters, ear-rings, and scented gloves. Only twenty-three was Carlos Gonzales, and in Trinidad the men are ever so much younger than the women. Good-looking, too, was the amorous Gonzales; much more so than his friend, and more agreeable, too. At least, so the ladies said, though their husbands cursed him.

No sooner had Carlos cast eyes upon Louisa than he began to wish that this accommodating young female was in his stable rather than in that of a rival establishment. Dropping the racing vernacular, I mean that he coveted this artistic piece of feminine furniture for his own drawing-room —and other apartments. He pressed her little brown, warm hand in his when he bade her a farewell which was rather more impressive than his acquaintance with her warranted or conventionality demanded. Her eyes drooped, fell, and he saw those magnificent lashes of which I have spoken. He murmured, "Little one, mine shalt thou be!" into a pearl-like and not altogether reluctant ear, and then bade farewell to his watchful host, on whom these proceedings were not entirely lost, and who knew something of the reputation of his handsome friend.

That gentleman came again and often. He contrived clandestine meetings with the little traitress, and was very soon on the best of terms with her. She confided to him her distaste for the severe Pedro Ruiz, and he confided to her that he was greatly in want of money. Pedro, he said, had plenty. Could not Louisa——?

Louisa could. "Come to-night," she said. "Climb the tree and get in through the verandah. He is going away to Placedes, and will not be home till late to-morrow. I know where he keeps great piles of gold." Gonzales, the handsome and hard-up, greedily licked his lips with his long, fork-like tongue. He would have Pedro's money first. Then he would, if he remembered it, come back for Pedro's Louisa. The good, generous Gonzales! As for the dainty Calderon, one must certainly blame her, but—torture! Fie, Governor Picton, fie!

The Torture of Louisa Calderon.

It fell out as arranged. Carlos came at midnight and scaled the vine which grew along the wall. Louisa was in the room, scantily but picturesquely attired in some gossamer garment, which, like this true story, left little to the imagination. The man filled his pockets with good gold coin, and then, having attended to business, dallied awhile with pleasure. Towards the dawn—it breaks very early in Trinidad—he made his escape from the house he had robbed, and the very naughty Calderon crept back to her own rooms.

Ruiz returned the following night. He was not long in discovering that he had been robbed pretty extensively, and at once his suspicions flew to his impecunious friend, who had so many gambling debts and pretty acquaintances to provide for. Gonzales, he vowed, had robbed the house, and the Calderon had shown him where the gold was kept. The very next day he caused his false friend to be apprehended. Many dollars—how acquired he could not or would not say —were found upon the thief, and some remarks he let drop appeared to implicate Louisa Calderon. Towards that unfortunate child Pedro Ruiz displayed an extraordinary bitterness—he was furiously jealous, having all along more or less suspected the intrigue—and at length he demanded that she, too, should be taken into custody. She was taken before the justice, before whom the little intrigante fell upon her knees, and, with hands uplifted to high heaven, protested, with appeals to the Holy Virgin and some saints indigenous to Trinidad, her absolute innocence of any participation in the affair. General Picton was governor of the island. He was a stern, unbending sort of man, on whom the child's youth and esoteric loveliness were wasted. The extent of the magistrate's authority being limited, that functionary applied to the governor for further instructions, and received the following brutal and laconic order: "Inflict the torture upon Louisa Calderon."

There was little delay in proceeding to its execution. The girl was informed in the gaol where she was now confined that if she did not confess she would be subjected to the torture, that under this penalty her beauty and youth would be destroyed, and that the result of its infliction might easily be death; but, whatever the calamity, it would be on her own head, for if she would but acknowledge her complicity, she would not be called upon to endure it. While her mind was disturbed by such thoughts as this inhuman information put into her head, her fears were augmented by the introduction of three negresses in her prison, who were to undergo the same ordeal in order to induce a confession of witchcraft. In spite of her alarm and horror, the girl obstinately persisted in her plea of innocence, and a punishment was inflicted, improperly called picketing. This was a military punishment, perfectly distinct in its nature. But that practised upon Calderon was not real picketing. It was torture. In the case of military picketing the soldier exposed to this did stand with his foot on a picket, or sharp piece of wood, but, in mercy to him, a means of repose was afforded in the rotundus major, or interior of the arm. But this cunning mercy was not accorded to this young girl, according to the case for the prosecution at the trial. Her position was thus described: The great toe was lodged upon a sharp piece of wood, while the opposite wrist was suspended in a pulley, and the other hand and foot were lashed together. Another time the horrid ceremony was repeated, with this difference, that her feet were changed.

The first trial of General Picton took place in the Court of King's Bench, on February 24, 1806. Mr. Garrow stated the case for the prosecution. Whilst he expressed the strongest desire to bring to condign punishment the perpetrator of an offence so flagrant as that charged upon the defendant, yet much more happy would he be to find that there was no ground upon which the charge could be supported and that the British character was not stained by the adoption of so cruel a measure. The learned counsel then described the leading features of this remarkable case as I have sketched them above, and then produced a drawing in water-colours, in which the situation of the sufferer, the

magistrate, executioner, and secretary was described. It appeared to him, he said, that the case for the prosecution would be complete when those facts were established in evidence; but he was to be told that, though the highest authority in this country could not practise this on the humblest individual, yet that, by the laws of Spain, it could be perpetrated in the island of Trinidad. He would venture to assert that, if it were written in characters impossible to be misunderstood, that if it were the acknowledged law of Trinidad, it could be no justification of a British governor. Nothing could vindicate such a person but the law of imperious necessity, to which all must submit, The governor ought to have been aware that the torture was not known in England, and that it never would be, never could be, tolerated in this country.

Louisa Calderon was then called. She was then about sixteen years of age, still of an extremely comely countenance, being a mulatto or creole, and of extremely neat appearance. She was dressed in white, with a turban of white on her head, tied on in the custom of the country. Her person was slender, shapely, and graceful. She spoke English but very indifferently, and was examined by Mr. Adam, through the medium of a Spanish interpreter.

She deposed that she had resided in the island of Trinidad in 1801, and lived in the house of Don Pedro Ruiz at the time of the robbery. She and a woman who passed as her "mother"—I am quite unable to give any particulars respecting this doubtless exemplary matron—were taken up on suspicion and brought before Governor Picton, who committed them to prison, under the escort of three soldiers. She was put into close confinement, and, before she was taken there, the governor said, "If she did not confess who had stolen the money the hangman would have to deal with her." She was afterwards carried to the room where the torture was prepared Her left hand was tied up to the ceiling by a rope, with a pulley, her right hand was fastened behind, so that her right foot and hand came in contact, while the extremity of her left foot rested on the wooden spike. A drawing representing the exact situation, with a ferocious-looking negro holding the rope, was then shown to her, when she gave an involuntary shudder expressive of horror, which nothing but the most painful recollection could have excited; on which Mr. Garrow expressed his concern that his lordship had not been in a position to witness this accidental, but conclusive, evidence of the fact.

The remainder of the girl's evidence corroborated the statement of Mr. Garrow. She affirmed that she remained upon the spike for three-quarters of an hour, and the next day twenty-two minutes. She swooned away each time before she was taken down, and was then put into irons, called the "grillos," which were long pieces of iron, with two rings for the feet, fastened to the wall, and in this situation she remained for eight months. The effect produced by the torture was excruciating pain; her wrists and ankles were much swollen, and the former bore the marks of barbarity employed towards her to the day of the trial, and, doubtless, to her death.

Don Rafael Shandoz, an alguazil in the island, bore testimony to his having seen the girl immediately after the application of the torture. The apartment in which she was afterwards confined was like a garret, with sloping sides, and the grillos were so placed that by the lowness of the roof she could not raise herself up during the eight months of her confinement. There was no advocate appointed to attend on her behalf and no surgeon to assist her. The witness said that, though he had been some years on the island, he never knew the torture to be inflicted until the arrival of General Picton. After the eight months' confinement both Carlos and Louisa were released. The order for the application of the torture, in the following words:

"Applicase la question a Louisa Calderon,"

was then proved to be in the handwriting of the defendant.

Mr. Dallas defended Picton, and argued in his favour:

Firstly—That by the law of Spain, in the present instance, torture was directed; and, being bound to administer that law, he was vindicated in its application.

Secondly—The order for the torture, if not unlawfully, was not maliciously issued.

Thirdly—If it were unlawful, yet, if the order were erroneously or mistakenly issued, it was a complete answer to a criminal charge.

Lord Ellenborough summed up. He rather favoured the view of the defence, and said that the jury might take it to be the existing law of Old Spain that torture might be inflicted. It was too much to say that a discontinuance of a practice could repeal a law; but they had to determine whether they were convinced that torture had ever been part of the law of Trinidad; and also whether they were convinced that it was part of the law of Trinidad at the time of its capture. If so, they would enter a special verdict; if otherwise, they would find the defendant guilty.

The jury found there was no such law existing in the island as that of torture at the time of the surrender of Trinidad to the British. By the direction of Lord Ellenborough they, therefore, found the defendant guilty. The trial lasted from nine in the morning till seven at night.

Governor Picton walked the hall of the Courts during the whole of the trial. He was a tall man, of a very sallow complexion, apparently about fifty years of age, and dressed in black. He was accompanied by several of the civil officers of the island.

Mr. Dallas moved on April 25 for a new trial, and this was eventually allowed, with a different result to the first.

A respectable monthly publication concluded its notice of this affair as follows—I quote it in justice to Picton's memory:

> "After a trial which seemed to have no end, after an expense of seven thousand pounds, which must have completed his ruin, had not his venerable uncle defrayed the whole costs of the suit, while the expenses of his prosecutor were all paid by the Government, his honour and justice were established on the firmest basis and to the perfect satisfaction of every upright mind."

The subsequent happenings to the fair Calderon and the gallant Gonzalez are unknown to me. One hardly likes to express the hope that they married and lived happily ever after, for the candid historian must admit that neither deserved so pleasant an ending to their adventures.

But fancy torturing little Louisa, so pretty and so naughty! Fie, Governor Picton, fie!

One for the Lawyer.

At the Reading Assizes, in the year 1889, a horse-dealer was called as a witness in a case, and the opposing counsel thought he could score a point by showing the worthlessness of horse-dealers in general, and of this one in particular.

"Now, sir," he said, "you are a horse-dealer, eh? And I suppose you consider that you horse-dealers are very respectable fellows?"

"Well, I dunno. I always reckoned as, barrin' you lawyers, we was the biggest thieves unhung!"

The court roared with laughter, and the lawyer told the witness he might stand down.

A Cruel Skipper.

In the year 1738, Captain John Jaen was executed for the murder of a cabin-boy. Jaen was the master of a vessel fitted out by some Bristol merchants for South Carolina, and his disposition appears to have been naturally fierce and domineering, and having used his cabin-boy so cruelly that he died, he was, upon his return, immediately arrested and committed for trial. He, however, pleaded that two of his principal witnesses were absent, and therefore his trial was postponed until their return from a voyage to the West Indies.

It appeared from the evidence that he had either whipped, or caused to be whipped, the boy every day during the voyage, until the time of his death. That he had ordered him to be tied with ropes to the mainmast for nine days, with his arms and legs extended to the utmost, while he whipped him until he was covered with blood, and then filled the wounds with brine and pickle. It was also deposed that, under this terrible usage the boy soon became speechless; but the inhuman captain still continued to maltreat him by stamping upon, kicking, and bruising him, and compelling him to eat and drink the most disgusting things; and, to close this scene of inhuman cruelty, upon the very last day of his life, the poor boy had received eighteen lashes!

It was further deposed that when the body was being sewn up in a hammock to be thrown overboard, it had as many colours as the rainbow; that his flesh was, in some places, as soft as jelly, and his head swollen to almost twice its natural size; and, upon the whole, a more cruel, bloody, premeditated, and wilful murder had never been perpetrated. The evidence being overwhelmingly against him, Captain Jaen was sentenced to death, and he was accordingly executed and his body hung in chains over the King's powder-house.

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THE

MACCLESFIELD MURDER

How Henry Leigh killed a child eight years old to obtain a princely fortune —of 12s. 3d.!

"I did this deed, this act of shame
Which makes all tremble at my name
And casts me to eternal flame . . ."
—FLORIAN ASHLEY, "The Decadent."

AT Chester, on August 13, 1877, a young man, named Henry Leigh, was hanged, whose crime was about as mean and brutal as anything recorded in the history of crime. The man who could deliberately waylay a young child, rob her of the few paltry shillings in her possession, and throw her into a canal to drown because she threatened to inform her mother, is outside the pale of ordinary humanity. On him sympathy is, of necessity, wasted and pity misapplied. Mr. Henry Leigh would have fared badly at the hands of the good people of Macclesfield or Chester had he been so unfortunate as to fall into their clutches, and I am not sure that even that fate would not have been thoroughly well deserved. He committed a foul and almost unparalleled crime, and after the deed proceeded to a public-house to spend some of the money of which he had robbed a harmless and inoffensive child. Ever he was at last brought to see the enormity of his guilt, and there is reason to believe that the remorse he expressed at the deed and his sorrow for the grief sustained by the poor widowed mother of his victim were, at least, sincere.

He was comparatively well educated for his position in life, and displayed an intelligence for which he would not, on the mere strength of his appearance, have been given credit. It is the less easy to understand how he came to plan so pitiful a crime and how he found the hardihood and cruel resolution to carry it out. But murderers are often made of the most unlikely material, and the greatest wickedness, as we know, can lurk in the least suspected places.

Near the town of Macclesfield is a village called Sutton, and here at the time of this event resided a widow named Halton, with one daughter, Mary Ann, a well-grown and intelligent little girl of eight years of age. Mrs. Halton was employed as a weaver at Bamford's factory, which was separated from Sutton by a distance of some two and a-half miles, and it was her custom occasionally to send her little daughter to draw her wages. The man Henry Leigh was also a weaver, and resided with his wife and child at Macclesfield. Between the Leigh and Halton families existed a considerable intimacy, and the widow was often in the habit of dropping into Leigh's cottage and enjoying a gossip with the latter's wife. This man had been leading a somewhat idle and dissolute life shortly before this terrible event, and was without employment; but his wife was not aware of this fact, since he had been able to disguise it from her and to hand her money from time to time, which he represented to be his wages. Henry Leigh was then about twenty-four years of age, a little man, with a rather intelligent type of countenance, dark brown hair, cut close to the head, and clear grey eyes. He was shabby and unkempt at the time of his arrest, but a long sojourn in prison enormously improved his appearance, and he presented a sleek and well-cared-for aspect when placed upon trial. I mention this circumstance to show that gaol life can, at any rate, be made to agree with some people.

On Friday, March 23, 1877, Mrs. Halton was at Leigh's cottage, in Fence Street, Macclesfield, and in the course of conversation the woman announced the fact that she meant to send her child to draw her wages "from Bamford's" the following morning. Leigh took particular notice of what she said, and there is no doubt that he there and then determined that this money should not reach the widow if he could prevent it. He was penniless himself, and the next day being a Saturday, his wife would naturally expect the wages which she supposed her idle husband to be earning.

The young miscreant spent the rest of that day revolving schemes in his mind to procure this money—twelve and threepence was all it amounted to—and first one and then another idea occurred to him, only to be put on one side as too uncertain or too risky. He sought inspiration in the public-house, where he spent three-halfpence given to him by his wife, and there a brilliant notion came into his head. He had suddenly discovered a method by which this wealth —not beyond the dreams of his avarice—might be secured without much risk to himself or the necessity of violence to others, and the next morning he was up betimes, prepared to put his scheme into execution.

He loafed about near Bamford's factory until about twelve o'clock, at which hour he knew the manager would commence to pay the wages of the hands employed there. He then approached three boys who were standing near, and asked two of them to take a note up for him "to Mr. Robinson, at the factory," promising them "a trifle for themselves" if they executed the mission successfully. The lads accepted the note, and it was afterwards proved that the writing was that of a man. It was written in pencil, and purported to come from Mrs. Halton. The note could not be produced at the trial, having been destroyed, but Mr. Robinson remembered that it contained the following words: "Please to pay bearer my wages, as my daughter is sick and can't come. Wrap it up in paper with a piece of string, so he won't lose it, and oblige, yours, E. HALTON, 60, Fence Street."

The manager appears to have felt some suspicion as to the bona fides of this communication, and he did not send the money by the boy as the schemer, Leigh, confidently expected. Instead, he sent back a message "that he would send it up just now." The boy declared that Leigh then disappeared, but not till he had expressed his disappointment at not receiving the money.

But the scoundrel did not go far away. Thwarted and balked in one plan, he determined to resort to another and even more dastardly one. He decided to loiter about until little Mary Ann Halton came along, to get into conversation with her, and, by some means or other, fair or foul, to obtain the money from the child on the way home. About a quarter past twelve the little girl was seen going up Waller Street towards the factory, and, on her arrival there, Mr. Robinson mentioned to her that a note had been sent in reference to her mother's wages. The kindly manager counted out the money, placed it in a purse, with which the child had come provided, and then wrapped the purse in a handkerchief, which she placed in her pocket. He warned her to be careful and not to loiter on the way home, and the poor little girl having promised, she left the factory, and was shortly afterwards joined by Leigh, of whom she had, of course, no reason to be suspicious. It was the old fairy-tale of "The Wolf and Red Riding Hood" over again! "Come along home by the canal, Mary Ann," said the insidious Leigh, with his wicked mind running on that twelve shillings and threepence, "and I'll take care of you." "But it's the longest way," objected the child, "and mother is waiting for the money." "She's in no hurry," was the answer, "and she'd rather I saw you safe home. Come along by the canal and watch the barges." He took her hand and led the unwilling child towards the water. A little later they were seen walking on the towing-path by a gentleman's servant, who observed them from a window which commanded a full view of the canal. A very few moments afterwards Leigh must have robbed the child, and when she screamed and said she would tell her mother, he determined to silence her mouth for ever. No one was about to observe his movements, and, seizing the little victim in his arms, he hurled her with all his force into the water. She had struggled a good deal while the murderer was searching for her money, and when the body was recovered by some labourers—only about a quarter of an hour after Leigh and his victim had been seen together—it was found that she had been very roughly dealt with prior to being cast into the

water and left to drown. There were lacerations on the poor little wet face, marks on her cheeks, apparently resulting from some forcible compression, and a lacerated wound on the right thigh. The pocket of her dress, in which she had so carefully placed the handkerchief containing the money, had been ripped off, and thus the motive for the cold-blooded deed was at once made plain.

Having in this cruel fashion obtained the few shillings on which he had set his heart, the murderer proceeded to the Old Ship public-house, situated about two miles from the spot where he had thrown the girl into the canal. He was very pale and excited, and the landlady, who served him with some beer, remarked the dirty state of his clogs and made some observation on their condition. "Oh!" said Leigh, "I got 'em like that walking from Bollingdon this morning." He had three glasses of beer in this house,

DETERMINED TO SILENCE HER MOUTH FOR EVER.

and remained there, chatting to the other customers and smoking his pipe, for over an hour, at the expiration of which time he returned to his home. Arrived there, he handed his wife three half-crowns and a sixpence, and sat down to his dinner. During the meal Mrs. Halton came in, and she was then in a state of great alarm at the absence of Mary Ann, and seemed to be extremely suspicious of Leigh, who looked very uneasy and denied having seen the missing child. She asked him if he had not sent two boys with a note requesting Mr. Robinson to hand her wages over to them, and, though he made no reference to that occurrence, he again denied that he knew anything of the little girl or what had become of her. Mrs. Halton said, "Never mind the money—where is my child?" And she threatened to report the whole circumstances to the police. Leigh went on with his dinner. "I would if I were you," he remarked surlily, and declined to say another word.

Mrs. Halton, distracted at the continued absence of her little girl, reported the matter to the police, who arrived at Leigh's cottage at five o'clock, and the latter at once bolted into the outhouse and locked himself in. The officers did not see fit to arrest him then, and went to make further and fuller inquiry, learning that the suspected man had been seen by two or three people in the company of the child, and they returned in two hours to effect his capture. Leigh was still in hiding in the outhouse, and the door being broken open, he was taken into custody, news having now arrived of the discovery of the body. On the roof of the building the police found a sum of three shillings and ninepence under a mug, and this amount, together with three-halfpence in the prisoner's pockets, the coppers he had spent on beer, and the money given to his wife made up the exact sum which Mr. Robinson had handed to the deceased girl.

Two days after his arrest Leigh made a determined effort to commit suicide in his cell at the Macclesfield police-station. He nearly succeeded in hanging himself with his braces, and was unconscious when cut down; but great care was taken of him and every means used to restore him to health, and he looked remarkably well when brought up for trial at the Chester Summer Assizes, before Lord Justice Bramwell, on July 25, 1877. Only a few witnesses were called for the prosecution, and the evidence was purely of a circumstantial nature, but it, nevertheless, satisfactorily established the guilt of the prisoner. The counsel for the defence asked for a verdict of manslaughter, on the grounds that the deceased might have been frightened by the robbery and have fallen into the water, but the jury declined to accept this view, and, after a very short consultation, returned into court with a verdict of guilty. The prisoner, who showed great self-possession and betrayed no emotion of any kind, said that he had "no remarks to offer" when asked the usual question, and listened to the sentence of death with the utmost firmness.

Before his execution Leigh made a full confession of his

guilt, and described every circumstance of the crime. He stated that he had held his victim down on the bank while he cut away the pocket of her dress, and that she struggled and screamed with a power beyond her years. He was fearful that her cries would attract attention, and he then picked her up and threw her into the canal. He showed much remorse for the terrible act, and admitted the justice of his sentence, and that "he ought to suffer for what he had done." He said the child was a very intelligent one, and that they had all loved her. On his behalf, the chaplain of the gaol wrote a letter to the bereaved mother, in which he expressed the firm belief that the convict was sincerely and truly penitent. In a letter to his parents Leigh spoke of his sorrow at bringing such an infamy upon their name, and he also wrote a most affectionate and admirably-worded letter to his wife.

Marwood was the executioner. Although the distance from the condemned cell to the gallows was fully two hundred yards, Leigh walked with great firmness and resolution, and throughout the trying ordeal displayed the utmost fortitude. An unusually long drop was allowed in this case—over seven feet—and the unfortunate man appeared to suffer very little.

Leaves from Our Notebook.

A Smart Trick.

In July of the year 1887, a well-dressed gentleman drove up in a handsome equipage to a Regent Street jeweller's, and, entering the shop, requested to see the manager. On the latter presenting himself, the gentleman asked him if he would send round a selection of diamonds in different settings, rings, pins, brooches, and ear-rings, to his hotel, one of the leading London establishments. He was, he said, in a hurry to go to the Continent, and he and his wife would examine them while packing up. The firm sent round one of their most trustworthy men, with a box of jewellery, and the gentleman selected about five thousand pounds' worth of them. There was a servant in the room, who was apparently smarting under some real or supposed grievance, and who was very impudent to his employer, and with whom the gentleman was evidently becoming more and more angry.

He finally put the jewels he wanted back in the box, sealing it up with red tape and sealing-wax.

This servant was an accomplice, and had previously ascertained the shape and make of the boxes used by the Regent Street firm.

As soon as the box was sealed, he prepared another one just like it, from the stock he had provided, and left it in readiness outside the door. He then entered the room, and made a most insulting remark to his "master," who made a sudden dash at him, with the box of diamonds under his arm, and followed the servant to the door and on to the landing. He was not out of the room more than three or four seconds, but quite long enough to enable him to change the boxes and return with the dummy. He apologised for the rudeness of his servant, and for his outburst of temper, and handed the man the box and a cheque, telling him to place the former in a safe until the cheque had gone through, when he was to send it to Lady B——, who was staying at the seat of a well-known nobleman in Devonshire. The dummy box was put in the firm's safe, and the cheque sent to the bank. Needless to say, it was returned dishonoured, and when the box was opened it was found to contain three pieces of coal, which, together with the box, are now in the Black Museum.

Replies to Queries

Austin.—"Who Killed Elizabeth Camp?" will shortly appear. We have our own theory, and you will find it a startling one. The murderer was known, but one of the newspapers "gave it away."

First (Liverpool).—No doubt the landlord of the "Leicester Hotel" will show you the blood-stained grate! The exact address is 20, Upper Grenville Street, Great George Street, Liverpool. Yes, 1840.

Charles Barton.—If you were to get the paper regularly and not spasmodically you would find the crimes in question. Muller did confess. Lefroy will appear very soon. Possess your soul in patience for a while.

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OPENING CHAPTERS IN No. 71.

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